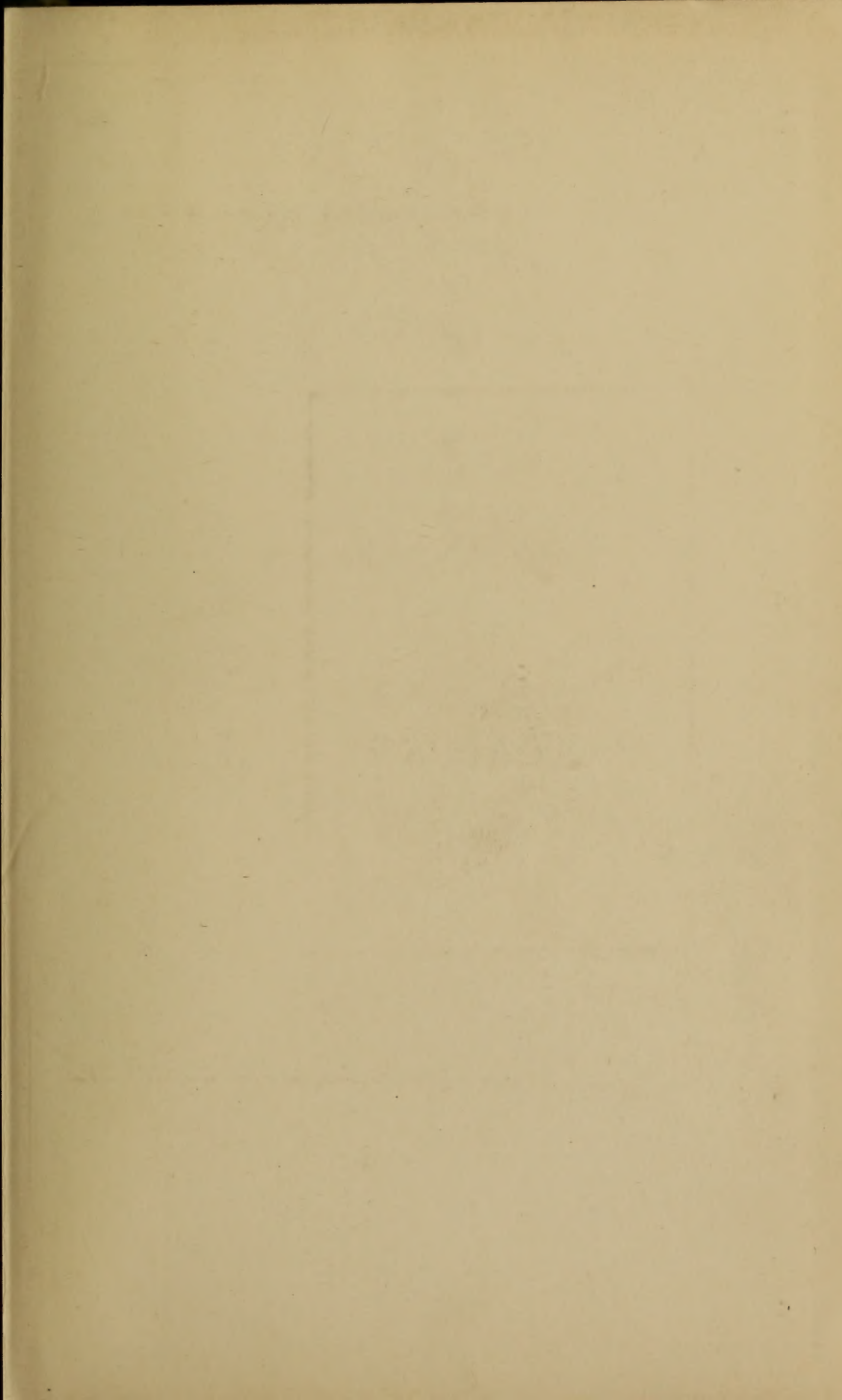
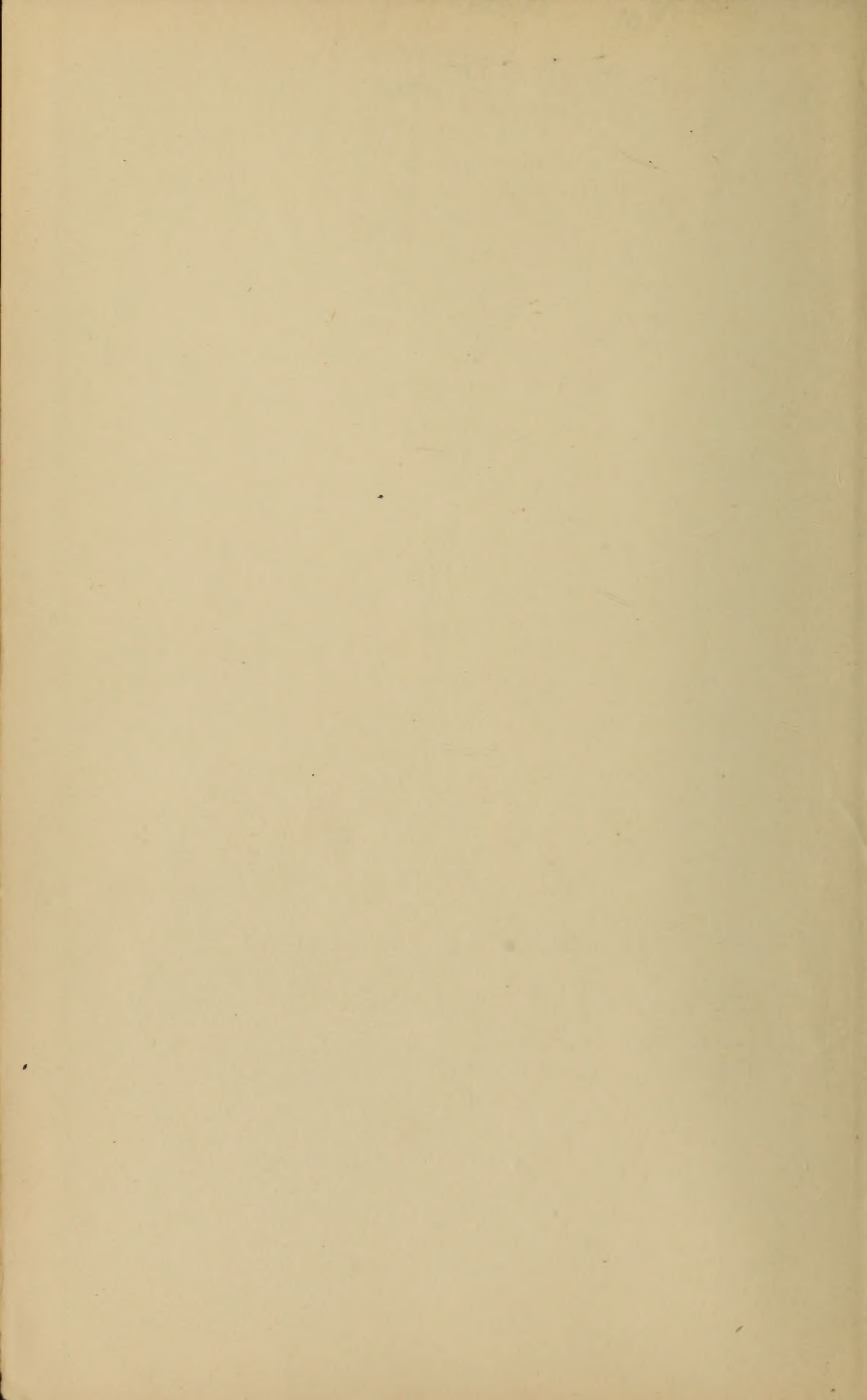


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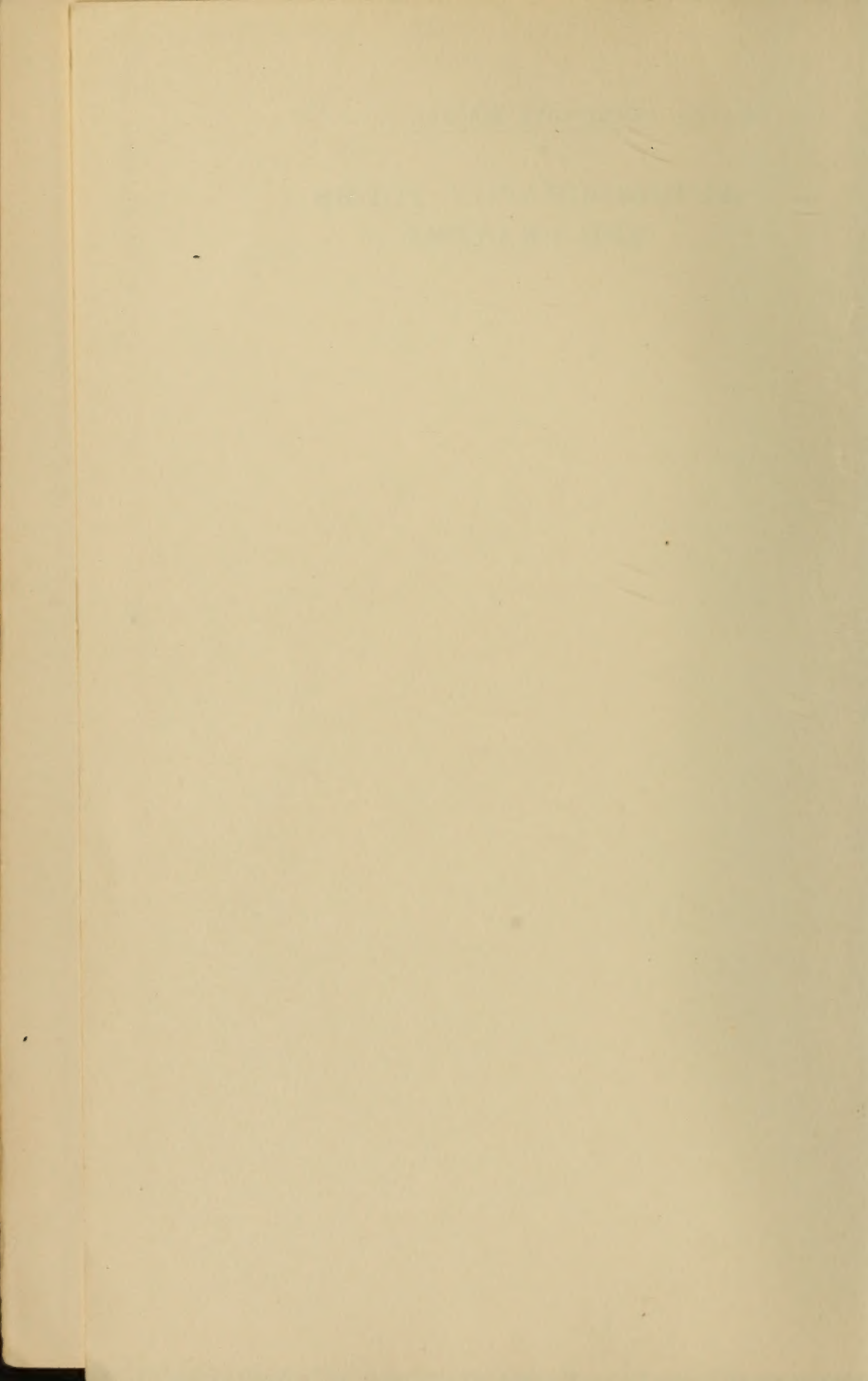




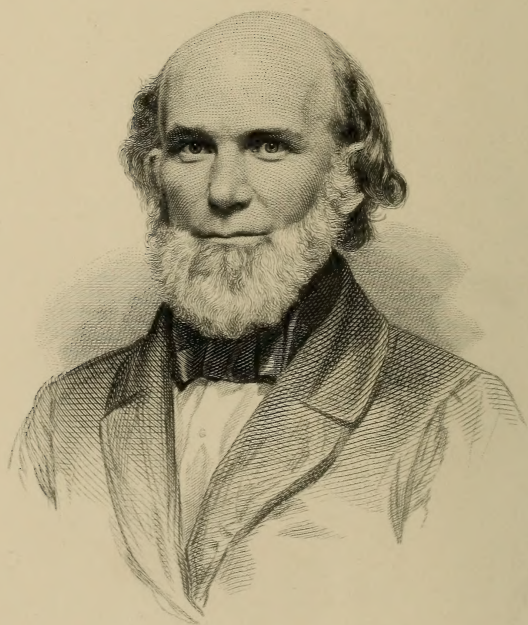


*Works* Centenary Edition [v. 13]

AUTOBIOGRAPHY, POEMS  
AND PRAYERS







THEODORE PARKER.

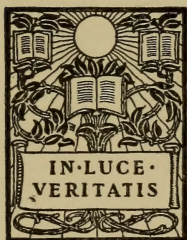
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# AUTOBIOGRAPHY, POEMS AND PRAYERS

BY  
THEODORE PARKER

EDITED WITH NOTES  
BY  
RUFUS LEIGHTON



BOSTON  
AMERICAN UNITARIAN ASSOCIATION  
25 BEACON STREET

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## EDITOR'S PREFACE

The ministry of Theodore Parker formed a unique epoch in the annals of Boston and the history of the church, of marked significance and far-reaching influence, not only in this country, but extending to many foreign lands.

On the 21st of June, 1838, he was ordained as minister to the church in West Roxbury. This position was admirably suited to his condition and needs at that time. The congregation was small and the salary meager; but he was near the library of Harvard College and to the intellectual supplies of Boston. The surroundings were rural, and afforded him opportunity to enjoy his love of nature. He made friends of all his parishioners, most of whom were plain farmers, a few highly cultured, and was equally at home with them in their several interests. He was greatly beloved by them, and reciprocated their affection. In his quiet library he pursued his studies diligently all the week, sometimes sixteen hours a day for successive weeks. His Sunday services were a great pleasure to him, and most welcome to his hearers. Gradually he evolved his new views of religion, and gladly they took them in, and were not shocked thereat. Even the famous South Boston sermon on "The Transient and Permanent in Christianity," preached in 1841, did not abate their loyalty to him.

But a wider field was opening to him. In the winter of 1841-42 he delivered a course of lectures in Boston, which were subsequently embodied in the "Discourse of Religion," which set forth in detail and with great

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clearness his beliefs and disbeliefs in matters pertaining to religion. Other lectures followed, and his audiences were large and enthusiastic, notwithstanding the clerical opposition against him, which excluded him from nearly all the Unitarian pulpits.

February 16th, 1845, he began to preach in Boston under an engagement for a year, in response to an invitation from a committee of gentlemen who secured the Melodeon for that purpose, the best hall that could be obtained at that time. It was rather a dingy place, poorly lighted, not well ventilated, and used during the week for popular entertainments not of the highest grade. Before the year expired the Twenty-eighth Congregational Society was organized, and on the 4th of January, 1846, Mr. Parker was installed as its permanent minister, with the simplest of ceremonies, he preaching his own sermon, and praying his own prayer. He at once attracted a large congregation, frequently larger than the great hall could conveniently accommodate. In November, 1852, the society removed to the new and beautiful Music Hall, which was much more spacious, though none too large for the audience — a most agreeable change for both pastor and people.

Mr. Parker's ministry in Boston covered a period of fourteen years, during which he preached to the largest congregation gathered in any church in that city, comprising all sorts and conditions of men, from the most cultured to the least — each finding something to satisfy him. His earnestness and sincerity, his vast range of information, embracing every department of human knowledge, his wealth of illustration, his aptness in discriminating between shams and realities, his felicity of language, and wonderful faculty



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of adapting his speech to the comprehension of listeners of all grades — made his sermons a delight to the minds and a refreshment to the souls of those who heard them.

He preached the “absolute religion,” and its adaptation to every department and phase of human life and conduct, exposed the falseness and hollowness of the popular theology, held up to view and denounced the sins of the nation and of society — war, slavery, intemperance, the degradation of woman, covetousness, and minor vices, portrayed with masterly hand many prominent men of the nation, as warnings or examples, set up a lofty ideal of manhood and womanhood, and sought to bring all up to that high standard of virtue and excellence. The richness of his intellect, the sensitiveness of his conscience, the tenderness of his heart, the yearning of his soul for the “first good, first perfect, and first fair,” his love of truth, his hatred of wrong and injustice, his moral courage, his intense humanity, and his fervid piety, were expressed in his sermons and prayers, which lifted his hearers to a higher plane, and gave them new life and strength and hope. Nothing like them was ever heard in any other pulpit. Mr. George Ripley, well known as a fine scholar and a nice critic, said with regard to these prayers: “There has been no devotional poetry to compare with them since that of the great Hebrew masters of song.” Flowers were never absent from his pulpit, and he wove their beauty into his speech. He was a close student of nature as well as of books, and all her various manifestations ministered to his sense of beauty and fitness, and furnished him with the similes and analogies with which his discourses were adorned.

A man of such commanding ability and genuine

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sympathy with mankind could not be spared from taking an active part in any movement for the uplifting of the unfortunate and the down-trodden. In 1845 he joined the antislavery leaders in their work and from that time forward was one of the most conspicuous and indefatigable laborers in that field. He did an immense service in arousing and educating the conscience of the people, in impelling them to recognize and oppose the evils of slavery, and in enunciating and diffusing the principles and shaping the policy which found practical expression in the national politics, and which led ultimately to the overthrow of that gigantic wrong. He gave himself to this cause with all the ardor and thoroughness which characterized his efforts in the theological field, and lavished upon it all the wealth of his nature and acquirements. His writings upon this subject form a body of antislavery literature of great value for clearness and accuracy of statement, historical narrative, and pertinent facts and statistics,—showing the rise and progress of slavery and the development of the Southern policy, and depicting the baneful results of the institution in clear, bold colors; setting forth also the great American idea which gives to the Constitution and the Union their value and glory, and rebuking with just indignation the men in high places who betrayed that idea and imperiled the safety and prosperity of the country.

His exposition of the wickedness and injustice of the Fugitive Slave Law, and his denunciation of it and appeals to the higher law, when eminent statesmen, clergymen and merchants, led by Daniel Webster, contrived to uphold it, and secure its enforcement, form a striking episode in the history of that eventful

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period. His speech and action, when the kidnappers came to Boston in search of their fugitive slaves, proved his courage, and led to his indictment and the writing of his "Defense"—a remarkable book, which will be of great value to the future historian. It contains the best account to be found of judicial tyranny and legal injustice from the reign of James I to the time of his own indictment.

His efforts for the suppression of poverty, ignorance, drunkenness, prostitution and crime, and the removal of their causes, were vigorous and unceasing, and the victims of those evils found in him a wise friend and helper. These matters are discussed with great plainness and efficiency in his books, and are abundantly illustrated with facts and figures. His personal efforts, singly or in combination with others, for the benefit of these unfortunate classes were without stint, and much of his time was consumed in that way.

The movement in behalf of the rights of woman and her equality with man found in him a hearty and eloquent advocate, and he was one of the foremost in denouncing the injustice of those who deny these rights, in exposing the fallacies of their arguments, and appealing to the common sense and justice of mankind to accord to her her proper position and an equal opportunity with man for culture, development, and the exercise of her natural talents in various directions.

Mr. Parker's preaching and other public speaking were not confined to Boston. As he became better known he was in demand in the lecture room and at gatherings of various kinds in New England and beyond. During the last ten years of his active life he lec-

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tured from eighty to one hundred times each year, his field comprising every Northern State east of the Mississippi, and once he spoke in the slave State of Delaware, on slavery itself. When he entered the lecture room he faced a hostile and frowning audience, but such was his tact in presenting the subject and so interested became the listeners, that they applauded him and at the conclusion gave him a vote of thanks. Many invitations to lecture he was compelled to decline. The halls were always crowded, and he made hosts of friends during these expeditions, comprising many of the best people in the various towns, and overcame much of the prejudice existing against him. He spoke upon the subjects in which he was so deeply interested, mostly upon the various matters of reform to which he had given his life — not, however, making his theological views too prominent — in the simplest Saxon speech, and won his hearers to his side by his earnestness, directness, candor and natural eloquence, and his happy faculty of presenting great themes, however dry and matter-of-fact in detail, in an attractive manner. An instance of this is given by T. W. Higginson, who says:

“I have always remembered a certain lecture of his on the Anglo-Saxon as the most wonderful instance that ever came within my knowledge of the adaptation of solid learning to the popular intellect. There was almost two hours of unadorned fact — for there was less than usual of relief and illustration — yet the lyceum audience listened as if an angel sang to them. So perfect was his sense of purpose and of power, so clear and lucid was his delivery, with such wonderful composure did he lay out, section by section, his historical chart, that he grasped his hearers as absolutely



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as he grasped his subject. Without grace or beauty or melody, his mere elocution was sufficient to produce effects which melody, grace or beauty might have sought for in vain."

Although he was one of the giants of learning, his style is remarkable for its freedom from all taint of scholastic and metaphysical terms. Speaking of his mental qualifications, James Freeman Clarke, one of the few Unitarians who believed in the freedom of thought and stood by Mr. Parker when the clergy of that faith denounced him, and remained his warm friend to the last, said of him:

"Some men's minds are filled with a great multitude of ill-assorted knowledges, crowded confusedly together like a mob around a muster ground. Others have a very small number of very well arranged and drilled opinions, like a militia regiment, thoroughly organized as regards its officers, but very thin as regards its rank and file. The thoughts, opinions, convictions, varieties of knowledge in Theodore Parker's mind are like a well-appointed and thoroughly-organized army, with full ranks, beautiful in its uniforms and its banners, inspired by the martial airs of its music, complete in all arms — infantry, cavalry, engineers, artillery — marching to the overthrow of a demoralized and discouraged enemy."

Ralph Waldo Emerson said of him: "Such was the largeness of his reception of facts, and his skill to employ them, that it looked as if he were some President of Council to whom a score of telegraphs were ever bringing in reports and his information would have been excessive but for the noble use he made of it, ever in the interest of humanity."

Theodore Parker was a minister at large to all man-

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kind. Apart from the various organized benevolent bodies in which he was interested, he was accessible to every human being who came to him for information, advice or aid of any kind, and the absolute readiness with which he gave his time and attention to this large class marked him as the one friend who could always be relied upon when needed. However busily engaged he might be with his own most important affairs, when the visitor came — often an entire stranger who had no right to intrude upon him — he at once laid aside his book or pen, and turned his interest to the matter presented, as if it were of the most vital concern, until he satisfied the applicant. Nobody ever doubted his ability to answer any question put to him. He was a walking encyclopedia of knowledge, and was never known to be unequal to the occasion. A young Scotchman with a letter addressed to "Some Christian Minister in America," seeking employment in his handicraft, was told that the man most likely to help him lived at 1 Exeter Place, and when going there found he had not been misinformed. A Methodist minister from the country seeking literary help received it abundantly; likewise a Baptist. Anxious mothers came to him to ask his advice about their children; men in high office consulted him on the moral bearings of their official action; chairmen of committees asked him to write their reports; young ladies brought their verses for his judgment as to their fitness for publication; a revivalist asked leave to pray with him for his immediate conversion, and was courteously allowed to try. His home was a way-station, often a terminus for fugitive slaves, always lighted and warmed; also for political exiles from foreign lands, who there found wise counsel and friendly aid

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in getting settled in their new home. Distressed men, sorrowing women, poverty-stricken scholars, all kinds of needy folk, came to him for comfort and advice. He helped them with money, and lavished upon them what was of far more value. His gifts, natural and acquired, were held in trust for his fellow men. The higher the gifts the greater the responsibility.

His correspondence was as unique as it was extensive. His ungathered parish, all over this country and resident in many foreign lands, and speaking many tongues, who had never seen his face or heard his voice, expressed to him their gratitude in writing, sought his counsel in mental and moral perplexities. Almost illegible scrawls came from unlettered seekers after truth; the pathetic wail of some far-away sufferer; the doubts, fears, aspirations, hopes, joys of many were confided to him; the burdens of innumerable hearts and consciences from writers all unknown to him were laid before him, and crowded his busy day, but were never disregarded. A miner in Silesia, a weaver in Scotland, a nobleman in Sweden, hosts of Germans, simple men, learned scientists, Dutch, French, English scholars, South Americans also, were among his correspondents. A colonel of the United States Army in the Mexican War wrote as follows: "Speaking for fourteen of my brother officers, as well as myself, before to-morrow's battle, which may be our last, I must express to you our deep gratitude for the view of religion you have opened to us, who had thought ourselves unbelievers."

He was in constant communication with the great leaders of the Republican party — William H. Seward, Salmon P. Chase, John P. Hale, Charles Sumner, Henry Wilson, and others, and undoubtedly his influ-

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ence was exerted on the momentous questions of the day through them. Seward remarked to Wilson: "You have a wonderful man in Boston — Theodore Parker. In his grasp of the political issues of the times he surpasses us all."

He was one of the most delightful of companions. His quick comprehension of the capacity of those who came within his range, his keen sense of humor and playful fancy, his genial temper, broad sagacity, and hearty sympathies, put them at once at their ease, and while they recognized his greatness they were never overpowered by it. His conversational power was marvelous. He could talk upon any subject, and astonished and fascinated every listener — pouring out a flood of various and delightful information, wit and wisdom, adapted to the needs and intelligence of the hearer, and never failing to say the right thing in the right place. Thackeray said, when he came to America, that what he most desired was to hear Theodore Parker talk. He was a master of sarcasm and invective, and sometimes used them in the denunciation of crime and wickedness in high places, never wantonly to injure anyone's feelings, or from motives of revenge. He cherished no personal ill-will against any human being.

Although not wealthy, and with only very limited resources, he was the most generous of men. From his eighteenth year there was never a time when he was not giving the means of education to some young persons, often giving his personal instruction besides to those who needed it. He left a standing request with the president of Harvard College to be informed of any deserving young man who might be helped with a little money in his struggles for an edu-



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cation. Having learned that the Twenty-eighth Congregational Society was at one time four hundred dollars in debt, he proposed to the standing committee that his salary of two thousand dollars should be for the next year sixteen hundred dollars, thereby lifting the burden of debt from the society. On one occasion a pleasant excursion was planned by a few of his friends into New Hampshire, and the day fixed upon. The day before, he received a request to officiate at the funeral of a little negro child whom he had never known before, to take place the next day, and gave up the excursion to attend to this duty. He always had a tender regard for little children. In his long journeys across the country on lecture engagements, he carried a little bag of comfits to appease any restless little one whom he saw on the cars; or if he noticed any distressed and forlorn-appearing woman, he sought to comfort her with such kindness as he could offer. When at home the neighbors' little children would sometimes run up the long flights of stairs to his study, shouting "Parkie," "Parkie." The door would open and they would be welcomed in, toys would be produced, and he would get down on the floor and play with the youngsters, who would have a delightful time with him.

Spiritually he was of immense service to thousands of earnest men and women, who had fallen into indifference or unbelief in religious matters,—a condition for which the false theology and the low spiritual state of the church were largely responsible. By the promulgation of his ideas he created a powerful revival of fundamental religion through the country, not by dealing with the more superficial elements of human nature and character, as did the Calvinistic churches

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in their so-called revivals. Their barbaric creeds, worldly policy, and social inhumanities, and their interpretation of the Bible had repelled these people. His presentation of the natural religion, based on reason and the noblest instincts of humanity, drew them to his side, and they found a peace and satisfaction therein which they had not known before.

No man was ever more cordially hated by such as upheld the errors, hypocrisies and iniquities which he exposed. No man was ever more deeply and tenderly loved by those who recognized his true greatness and manliness. Those of his personal friends who survive hold him ever as a sacred memory in their hearts and count it as the choicest of blessings that they were privileged to come within the charmed circle of his presence.

RUFUS LEIGHTON.

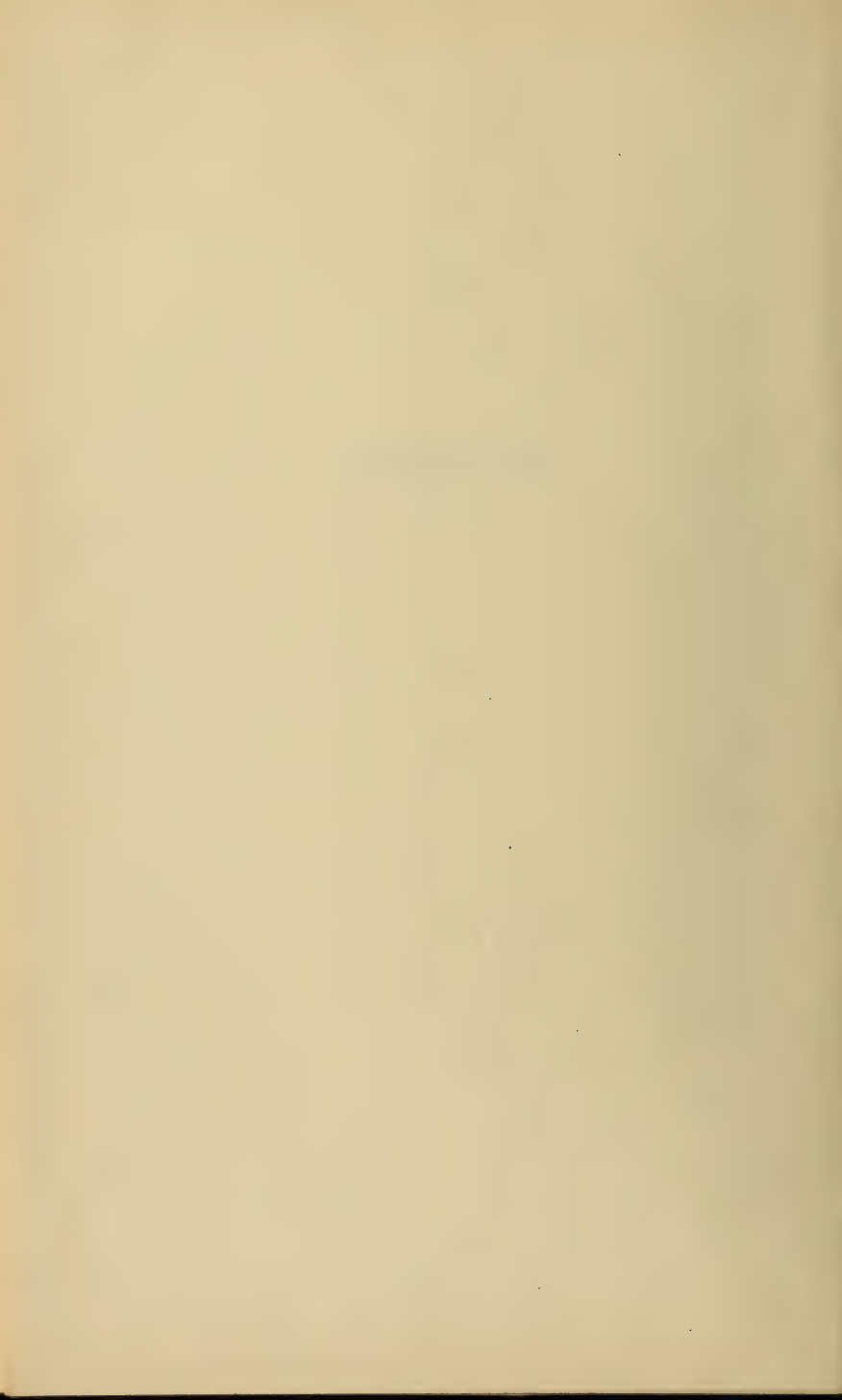
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## AUTOBIOGRAPHY





# I

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL FRAGMENT

### *Of the Material Surroundings*

About 1710, my grandfather's grandfather, John Parker, then somewhat advanced in life, with a part of his grown-up children, removed from Reading, where a family of Parkers had settled about 1640, to the Cambridge Farms, since called Lexington, where he had bought a considerable quantity of land, with one small house upon it, probably of logs. The next year he built him a large and commodious house, and furnished it with the usual out-buildings necessary for a farmer's business. The situation was pleasant; a considerable valley a mile or more in length and half a mile wide, with a fresh meadow at the bottom, called in deeds of the time "the great meadow," wound among hills tall and steep on the western and northern side, while on the south and east the hills were of less height and more gradual in their slope. Indeed, it is the general character of the hills in that part of the country to be steep on their southern and eastern side, and of gradual ascent on the opposite side. A brook stole through the valley or percolated through the soft, spongy meadow; following a continuation of the valley, it falls into Charles River at length. The stream was then much larger than at present; for now the hills have nearly all been stripped of their trees and the meadows drained, and the brook is proportionally shrunk, except when a sudden melting of snow

floods the meadow and restores it to more than its original size.

Near the upper end of the valley, in about the centre of his farm lot, the old settler built his house, in which children to the fourth generation were to be born to him. It stood about 80 or 100 feet above the present surface of the great meadow, on the south-east side of a high hill, which gently sloping in front of the house, rose steep and abrupt behind. It faced as near the south as the rude science of the owner or builder could make it, and so was a perpetual sun-dial. It had but one chimney, that a huge one in the center of the building. The large bricks, made half-a-mile off, were laid in clay as far as the ridge-pole, while the part of the chimney above the roof was pointed with mortar. Limestone was not found within many miles, and the want of it was a serious inconvenience in building. The house, like all the others in that neighborhood, was two stories high in front, and only one in the rear. The rooms were few, but large and airy; the windows not numerous, of various size, but all small; originally all the latches, except that of the "fore-door," were of wood, with wooden thumb-pieces, but these had nearly all passed away before my recollection. The house, as it stood in my day, had been built at different times, the eastern end being considerably younger than the western, and not furnished with the massive oak-beams which everywhere stuck out in the older part. A New England farmer of "comfortable estate" would hesitate a good deal before setting up his household in such a cheerless shelter; but three generations of stout and long-lived men were born and grew up there; and if the fourth be more puny and sink quicker to the grave, it is from

no fault of the old house, but from the consumption which such spongy meadows in New England seldom fail to produce in the course of time; even children, who have removed to healthier situations, carry with them the fatal poison in their blood, and transmit it to their sons and daughters.

As the old man at sunrise stood at the front or south door of his new house on some fine October morning of 1710, he could see but a single house, and that half or three-quarters of a mile off, the other side of the valley: two other columns of pale blue smoke in that direction might tell him of other neighbors, while not far off in the same valley were two others, hid by wooded hills; in a different direction one more house had been built earlier than his own, but on the north side of the hill which sheltered him.

Agriculture was at a low stage; that part of the country was covered with thick woods, and when the farmer cut down or girdled the trees and run the ground over with fire, the land must have looked as we see it now in parts of New Hampshire and Vermont, like "the abomination of desolation." However, he planted many apple-trees, importing them from England; but they had not been grafted, and so many of them bore sorry specimens of fruit. Many of those which it is said he set out were standing in my boyhood. He, or his son Josiah, who succeeded to his lands at Lexington, planted also locust-trees, whose white blossoms used to fill the air with sweetness in June. He also brought lilac-bushes, a common ornament about the houses of New England in the last century, and planted a barberry-bush, which in my boyhood had grown to prodigious dimensions, besides having increased and multiplied and replenished that part of the earth with its descendants.

In the rear of the house was a monstrous elm which endangered the building and was removed as a nuisance; that was a full-grown tree in the days of my grandfather's grandfather: other huge oaks and elms once stood close by, but they had all perished before my birth, and only a white ash with a great round top stood at the north-west corner of the house. It was planted by my grandfather, and was the largest tree of the kind I remember ever to have seen in New England.

Huge boulders lay scattered about along the valley and its tributaries; some were of the hard blueish greenstone which forms the skeleton of all the hills in that neighborhood, but others were of whitish granite, brought many miles from their original site to the north-west of that locality. Loose stones abounded; indeed, a more unattractive piece of land for a farmer to work could scarcely be found than that whole region for miles around in all directions. There were stones enough within a foot of the surface to fence all the land into acre lots, each surrounded with a strong "balance wall."

The most common trees were the numerous species of oak, the white pine, the pitch pine, and a variety of it called the yellow pine, the hemlock, and spruce; on the rocky hill-sides the juniper or red cedar; and in the swamps the cypress or white cedar; maples, the white or grey, black and yellow birches, the elm, white and black ashes, poplars, buttonwood, walnuts, chestnut, beech, sassafras, and wild hop or hop-hornbeam, willows: three species of sumach occurring on the homestead; indeed, most of the trees of New England grow within a few miles of my home.



*Of the Human Surroundings*

At the age of forty-five, my grandfather, Captain John Parker, died on the 17th of September, 1775. He was sick on the day of the Battle of Lexington, but did his duty from 2 A. M. till 12 at night. On the 17th of June he was too ill to be allowed to enter the turmoil of the Battle of Bunker Hill, so he discontentedly commanded troops who did no fighting that day. He was never well afterwards, and an epidemic dysentery in September found him an easy prey; he died at an early age for his long-lived family, and left three sons and four daughters, with a widow, who died at the respectable age of ninety-two, passing a portion of the last forty-seven years of her life in a second marriage, which both she and her children had bitter cause to repent. The respectable property of Captain Parker was wasted, the relict obliged to take her new husband and his children home, to be supported on "the widows' thirds." When my father married Hannah Stearns, the daughter of a neighboring farmer, he went back to the original homestead to take care of his mother, while he should support his handsome young wife and such family as might happen. It was the day of small things — he wore home-made blue yarn stockings at his wedding, and brought his wife home over the rough winding roads, riding in the saddle his tall grey horse, with her upon a pillion. The outfit of furniture did not bespeak more sumptuous carriage — the common plates were of wood; the pitcher, mugs, tea-cups and saucers, were of coarse earthenware; while the great carving dishes were of thick well-kept pewter. The holiday service "for company" was of the same material. Yet a few

costly wine glasses were not wanting, with two long-necked decanters, a few china tea-cups and saucers, of the minutest pattern, and the pride of the buffet, a large china bowl. Besides, the young bride could show patchwork bed-quilts and counterpanes, and a pretty store of linen towels, and a tablecloth of the same, white as the snow, and spun, woven, and bleached by her own laborious hands; and her father raised the flax which her brother pulled, and rotted, and broke, and swingled, and hackled, and combed. Hannah made their work into linen.

In the course of many years, ten children had been born to John and Hannah (one had slipped out of life an infant), when their fourth son and eleventh child came into the world, on the 24th of August, 1810, lagging a little more than five years after his youngest, and afterwards his favorite sister. I think I was the last child born in the old house, which then numbered just 100 years.

1. In my earliest childhood the family at home consisted (to begin in the order of age) of my father's mother, more than eighty at my birth. A tall, stately, proud-looking woman: she occupied an upper chamber, but came downstairs to dinner — other meals she took in her own room — and sat at the head of the table on the women side thereof, opposite my father, who kept up the ancient Puritan respect for age — always granting it precedence. She busied herself chiefly in knitting and puttering about the room, but passed the Sundays in reading the large Oxford quarto Bible of her husband, bought for the price of more than one load of hay, delivered up at Boston. She had also the original edition of the Puritan Hymn Book, printed at Cambridge, which was much in her

hands. She read the newspapers, the *Columbian Centinel*, which then appeared twice a week; but common mundane literature she seldom touched. It was a part of my childish business to carry the drink to my venerable grandmother — twice a day, at 11 A. M. and 4 P. M.; this was flip in cool weather, and in spring and summer was toddy or punch — the latter was, however, more commonly reserved for festive occasions.

2. Next were my father and mother: grave, thoughtful, serious, and industrious people. From an ancestry of five generations of his own name, who had died in New England, my father had inherited a strong and vigorous body; in his youth, there was but one man in town who could surpass him in physical strength, and few who were his equals. He could endure cold and heat, abstinence from food and rest, to a degree that would be impossible to men brought up in the effeminate ways which so often are thought to be the curses of civilization. He was a skilful farmer; though, as he lived not on his own land, but on “the widows’ thirds,” which his mother had only a life-estate in, he was debarred from making costly improvements in the way of buildings, fences, and apple-trees, which are long in returning profit to him that plants. But he yet contrived to have, perhaps, the best peach orchard in the county of Middlesex, to graft valuable kinds of fruit upon the old trees, and to adopt nearly all of the improvements in farming, as they were tested and found valuable.

He was also an ingenious mechanic: his father and grandfather were mechanics as well as farmers, and did all kinds of work in wood, from building saw-mills, cider-mills, pumps, to making flax-spinning wheels,

and turning wooden bread bowls out of maple stumps. He had religiously kept the tools of his father and grandfather, and like them continued to do all kinds of ordinary jobs; indeed, both he and they were such mechanics as men must be in a new country, and should not be in one where industry is more elaborate, and able-minded men are ready to turn their hand to anything. Mechanical talent was hereditary in the family for several generations, and appeared in my remote relations, and even among women, on whose slender shoulders this mantle seldom falls. My father was a thoughtful man, turning his large and active brain and his industrious hand to the mechanical and agricultural work before him; he was an originator of new and short ways of doing many things, and made his head save his hands. In this respect his father and grandfather resembled him.

His education — his schooling ended when the Revolution began — was of course, much neglected, but he was an uncommonly good arithmetician, often puzzling the school-masters with his original problems. Works on political economy and the philosophy of legislation were favorites with him. He had learned algebra and geometry, and was familiar with the use of logarithms. He read much on Sundays, in the long winter evenings, sometimes in the winter mornings before it was light, and in the other intervals of toil. His favorite works were history — that of New England he was quite familiar with — biography and travel; but he delighted most of all in works of philosophy which give the rationale of the material or the human world; of course he read much of the theology of his times, and the literature of progressive minds found its way to the farmer's kitchen. He had no fondness

for poetry. In his latter years, his reading was chiefly of novels, not to instruct, but only to amuse the old man, whose mortal life was all behind him. His fathers before him had been bookish men.

My mother, a woman of slight form, flaxen hair, blue eyes, and a singularly fresh and delicate complexion, more nervous than muscular, had less education than my father. Her reading was confined mainly to the Bible, the hymn-book, stories of New England captives among the Indians, of which there were many in the neighborhood, some in manuscript, and perhaps never printed. Ballads and other humble forms of poetry gave her a great delight. Of course the newspaper passed through her busy hands. My father often read aloud to her and the rest of the family in the long winter evenings, while her fingers were occupied with sewing or knitting, making or mending. She was industrious, as indeed were all the women of the neighborhood, but like them found opportunities, though too rare, for social enjoyment with them. Dinner was always at noon, and after that was over and its paraphernalia put in order, the household work was done, and a more comely dress took the place of the blue check of the morning.

She was eminently a religious woman. I have known few in whom the religious instincts were so active and so profound, and who seemed to me to enjoy so completely the life of God in the soul of man. To her the Deity was an Omnipresent Father, filling every point of space with His beautiful and loving presence. She saw Him in the rainbow and in the drops of rain which helped compose it as they fell into the muddy ground to come up grass and trees, corn and flowers. She took a deep and still delight in



silent prayer — of course it was chiefly the more spiritual part of the Old Testament and New Testament that formed her favorite reading, the dark theology of the times seems not to have blackened her soul at all. She took great pains with the moral culture of her children — at least with mine.

3. Come the brothers and sisters, nine in number, and one in infancy laid away in the grave. Some of these were much older than I, and had already gone to seek their fortunes in the various trades and callings of the time. There was still a houseful at home; all of them but three had a decided fondness for literature; they read all the good books they could lay their hands on, and copied the better parts. At school they were always among the best scholars.

4. The uncles and aunts come next. On my father's side there were two uncles and twice as many aunts; one of the former, a farmer not far off, a tall, grave man; the other, a more restless character, had served many years in the Revolutionary War; he was in the battles of Saratoga and Yorktown, had failed in business, gone to South Carolina, and married a woman with some property at Charleston, where he then lived, the father of one son. Of the aunts one was a maiden, an uncommonly intellectual woman; another was a widow living in an adjoining town, while two were the wives of farmers, one living in Nova Scotia, the other in Watertown not far off. On the maternal side there was one aunt, a strange, eccentric woman, and ten uncles, rejoicing in the names of Asahel, Jephthah, Noah, Ammi, Ishmael, and Habbakuk, and the like, which, if not euphonious, are at least scriptural. They were farmers and laborers, some rich and some poor.

Besides, the brothers and sisters of my grandmother

still continued to live, though aged people. Other relations from the Parker side of the family dwelt in more remote towns, who occasionally paid my father a visit, in special one very old and tall man, to whom he surrendered the head of the table and invited to say grace.

5. The neighbors about us were farmers; a shoemaker lived a mile off on one side, and a blacksmith within two miles on the other. These were generally, perhaps universally, honest, hard-working men; they went to meeting Sundays, morning and afternoon. "Their talk was of bullocks, and they were diligent to give the kine fodder." In their houses, generally neat as good house-wifery could make them, you would find the children's school-books, commonly a "singing-book," Billings' Collection, or some other, perhaps a hymn-book, and always a good quarto Bible kept in the best room, sometimes another Bible inherited from some Puritanic ancestor; these, with an almanac hung in the corner of the kitchen chimney, made up the family library. Perhaps a weekly or semi-weekly newspaper was also taken and diligently read. Two families not far off were exceptions to this poverty of books. I now think of no more. Yet now and then the life of some great thief, like Stephen Burrow, or some pirate or highwayman, would show itself. In other parts of Lexington, "on the great road," in "the middle of the town," perhaps there was a better show of books. I only speak of my immediate neighborhood.

### *From Birth Till the Age of Eight*

On the 24th of August, 1810, early on a hot, sweltering morning, I came into this world of joys

and sorrows. It seems one of my sisters thought an eleventh child improbable; for she had finished the "Family Tree" with the tenth — five years older than myself. However, a place was soon found for the new-comer both in the needle-work and the hearts of the household. As the youngest child, it may be supposed I was treated with uncommon indulgence, and probably received a good deal more than a tenth part of the affection distributed. I remember often to have heard neighbors say, "Why, Miss Parker, you're spilin' your boy! He never can take care of himself when he grows up." To which she replied she hoped not, and kissed my flaxen curls anew.

Among the earliest things I remember is the longing I used to feel to have the winter gone, and to see the great snow-bank — sometimes when new-fallen, as high as the top of the kitchen window — melt away in front of the house. I loved, though, to run in the snow barefoot, and with only my night-shirt on, for a few minutes at a time. When the snow was gone, the peculiar smell of the ground seemed to me delicious. The first warm days of spring, which brought the blue birds to their northern home, and tempted the bees to try short flights, in which they presently dropped on the straw my provident father had strewn for them over the snow about their hives, filled me with emotions of the deepest delight. In the winter I was limited to the kitchen, where I could build cob-houses, or form little bits of wood into fantastic shapes. Sometimes my father or one of my brothers would take me to the shop where he pursued his toilsome work, or to the barn, where the horse, the oxen, and the cows were a perpetual pleasure. But when the snow was gone, and the ground dry, I had free range. I used to sit

or lie on the ground in a dry and sheltered spot, and watch the great yellow clouds of April, that rolled their huge masses far above my head, filling my eye with their strange, fantastic, beautiful, and ever-changing forms, and my mind with wonder at what they were, and how they came there.

But the winter itself was not without its in-door pleasure, even for a little fellow in brown homespun petticoats. The uncles and aunts came in their sleighs full of cousins, some of whom were of my own age, to pass a long afternoon and evening, not without abundant good-cheer and a fire in "the other room," as the humble parlor was modestly named. They did not come without a great apple, or a little bag of shagbarks, or some other tid-bit for "Miss Parker's" baby; for so the youngest was called long after he ceased to merit the name. Nay, father and mother often returned these visits, and sometimes took the baby with them; because the mother did not like to leave the darling at home, or perhaps she wished to show how stout and strong her eleventh child had come into the world.

I must relate one example to show, as well as many more, the nice and delicate care she took of my moral culture. When a little boy in petticoats in my fourth year, one fine day in spring, my father led me by the hand to a distant part of the farm, but soon sent me home alone. On the way I had to pass a little "pond-hole" then spreading its waters wide; a rhodora in full bloom — a rare flower in my neighborhood, and which grew only in that locality — attracted my attention and drew me to the spot. I saw a little spotted tortoise sunning himself in the shallow water at the root of the flaming shrub. I lifted the stick I had in

my hand to strike the harmless reptile; for, though I had never killed any creature, yet I had seen other boys out of sport destroy birds, squirrels, and the like, and I felt a disposition to follow their wicked example. But all at once something checked my little arm, and a voice within me said, clear and loud, "It is wrong!" I held my uplifted stick in wonder at the new emotion — the consciousness of an involuntary but inward check upon my actions, till the tortoise and the rhodora both vanished from my sight. I hastened home and told the tale to my mother, and asked what was it that told me it was wrong? She wiped a tear from her eye with her apron, and taking me in her arms, said, "Some men call it conscience, but I prefer to call it the voice of God in the soul of man. If you listen and obey it, then it will speak clearer and clearer, and always guide you right; but if you turn a deaf ear or disobey, then it will fade out little by little, and leave you all in the dark and without a guide. Your life depends on heeding this little voice." She went her way, careful and troubled about many things, but doubtless pondered them in her motherly heart; while I went off to wonder and think it over in my poor, childish way. But I am sure no event in my life has made so deep and lasting an impression on me.



## II

### THE TRUE IDEA OF A CHRISTIAN CHURCH

For nearly a year we have assembled within these walls from week to week,— I think not idly; I know you have not come for any trivial end. You have recently made a formal organization of yourselves for religious action. To-day, at your request, I enter regularly on a ministry in the midst of you. What are we doing; what do we design to do? We are here to establish a Christian church; and a Christian church, as I understand it, is a body of men and women united together in a common desire of religious excellence and with a common regard for Jesus of Nazareth, regarding him as the noblest example of morality and religion,— as the model, therefore, in this respect for us. Such a church may have many rites, as our Catholic brothers, or but a few rites, as our Protestant brothers, or no rites at all, as our brothers the Friends. It may be, nevertheless, a Christian church; for the essential of substance, which makes it a religious body, is the union for the purpose of cultivating love to God and man; and the essential of form, which makes it a Christian body, is the common regard for Jesus, considered as the highest representative of God that we know. It is not the form, either of ritual or of doctrine, but the spirit which constitutes a Christian church. A staff may sustain an old man, or a young man may bear it in his hands as a toy, but walking is walking, though the man have no staff for ornament or support. A Christian spirit may exist under rituals and doctrines

the most diverse. It were hard to say a man is not a Christian, because he believes in the doctrine of the Trinity, or the pope, while Jesus taught no such doctrine; foolish to say one is no Christian because he denies the existence of a devil, though Jesus believed it. To make a man's Christian name depend on a belief of all that is related by the numerous writers in the Bible, is as absurd as to make that depend on a belief in all the words of Luther, or Calvin, or St. Augustine. It is not for me to say a man is not theoretically a Christian because he believes that slavery is a divine and Christian institution; that war is grateful to God — saying, with the Old Testament, that God himself “is a man of war,” who teaches men to fight, and curses such as refuse; — or because he believes that all men are born totally depraved, and the greater part of them are to be damned everlastingly by “a jealous God,” who is “angry with the wicked every day,” and that the few are to be “saved” only because God unjustly punished an innocent man for their sake. I will not say a man is not a Christian though he believe all the melancholy things related of God in some parts of the Old Testament, yet I know few doctrines so hostile to real religion as these have proved themselves. In our day it has strangely come to pass that a little sect, themselves hooted at and called “infidels” by the rest of Christendom, deny the name of Christian to such as publicly reject the miracles of the Bible. Time will doubtless correct this error. Fire is fire, and ashes ashes, say what we may; each will work after its kind. Now if Christianity be the absolute religion, it must allow all beliefs that are true, and it may exist and be developed in connection with all forms consistent with the abso-

lute religion, and the degree thereof represented by Jesus.

The action of a Christian church seems to be two-fold: first on its own members, and then, through their means, on others out of its pale. Let a word be said of each in its order. If I were to ask you why you came here to-day; why you have often come to this house hitherto? — the serious amongst you would say: That we might become better; more manly; upright before God and downright before men; that we might be Christians, men good and pious after the fashion Jesus spoke of. The first design of such a church then is to help ourselves become Christians. Now the substance of Christianity is piety — love to God, and goodness — love to men. It is a religion, the germs whereof are born in your heart, appearing in your earliest childhood; which are developed just in proportion as you become a man, and are indeed the standard measure of your life. As the primeval rock lies at the bottom of the sea and appears at the top of the loftiest mountains, so in a finished character religion underlies all and crowns all. Christianity, to be perfect and entire, demands a complete manliness; the development of the whole man, mind, conscience, heart, and soul. It aims not to destroy the sacred peculiarities of individual character. It cherishes and develops them in their perfection, leaving Paul to be Paul, not Peter, and John to be John, not Jude nor James. We are born different, into a world where unlike things are gathered together, that there may be a special work for each. Christianity respects this diversity in men, aiming not to undo but further God's will; not fashioning all men after one pattern, to think alike, act alike, be alike, even look alike. It is something

far other than Christianity which demands that. A Christian church then should put no fetters on the man; it should have unity of purpose, but with the most entire freedom for the individual. When you sacrifice the man to the mass in Church or State, Church or State becomes an offense, a stumbling-block in the way of progress, and must end or mend. The greater the variety of individualities in Church or State, the better is it, so long as all are really manly, humane, and accordant. A church must needs be partial, not catholic, where all men think alike, narrow and little. Your church-organ, to have compass and volume, must have pipes of various sound, and the skilful artist destroys none, but tunes them all to harmony; if otherwise, he does not understand his work. In becoming Christians let us not cease to be men; nay, we cannot be Christians unless we are men first. It were unchristian to love Christianity better than the truth, or Christ better than man.

But Christianity is not only the absolute religion; it has also the ideal man. In Jesus of Nazareth it gives us, in a certain sense, the model of religious excellence. It is a great thing to have the perfect idea of religion; to have also that idea made real, satisfactory to the wants of any age, were a yet further greatness. A Christian church should aim to have its members Christians as Jesus was the Christ; sons of man as he was; sons of God as much as he. To be that it is not needful to observe all the forms he complied with, only such forms as help you; not needful to have all the thoughts that he had, only such thoughts as are true. If Jesus were ever mistaken, as the Evangelists make it appear, then it is a part of Christianity to avoid his mistakes as well



as to accept his truths. It is the part of a Christian church to teach men so; to stop at no man's limitations; to prize no word so high as truth; no man so dear as God. Jesus came not to fetter men, but free them.

Jesus is a model man in this respect: that he stands in a true relation to men, that of forgiveness for their ill-treatment, service for their needs, trust in their nature, and constant love towards them,—towards even the wicked and hypocritical; in a true relation to God, that of entire obedience to Him, of perfect trust in Him, of love towards Him with the whole mind, heart, and soul; and love of God is also love of truth, goodness, usefulness, love of love itself. Obedience to God and trust in God is obedience to these things, and trust in them. If Jesus had loved any opinion better than truth, then had he lost that relation to God, and so far ceased to be inspired by Him; had he allowed any partial feeling to overcome the spirit of universal love, then also he had sundered himself from God, and been at discord, not in harmony with the Infinite.

If Jesus be the model man, then should a Christian church teach its members to hold the same relation to God that Christ held; to be one with Him; incarnations of God, as much and as far as Jesus was one with God, and an incarnation thereof, a manifestation of God in the flesh. It is Christian to receive all the truths of the Bible; all the truths that are not in the Bible just as much. It is Christian also to reject all the errors that come to us from without the Bible or from within the Bible. The Christian man, or the Christian church, is to stop at no man's limitation; at the limit of no book. God is not dead, nor even



asleep, but awake and alive as ever of old; He inspires men now no less than beforetime; is ready to fill your mind, heart, and soul with truth, love, life, as to fill Moses and Jesus, and that on the same terms; for inspiration comes by universal laws, and not by partial exceptions. Each point of spirit, as each atom of space, is still bathed in the tides of Deity. But all good men, all Christian men, all inspired men, will be no more alike than all wicked men. It is the same light which is blue in the sky and golden in the sun. "All nature's difference makes all nature's peace."

We can attain this relation to man and God only on condition that we are free. If a church cannot allow freedom it were better not to allow itself, but cease to be. Unity of purpose, with entire freedom for the individual, should be the motto. It is only free men that can find the truth, love the truth, live the truth. As much freedom as you shut out, so much falsehood do you shut in. It is a poor thing to purchase unity of church-action at the cost of individual freedom. The Catholic Church tried it, and you see what came thereof: science forsook it, calling it a den of lies. Morality forsook it, as the mystery of iniquity, and religion herself protested against it, as the mother of abominations. The Protestant churches are trying the same thing, and see whither they tend and what foes rise up against them,—philosophy with its Bible of nature, and religion with its Bible of man, both the handwriting of God. The great problem of Church and State is this: To produce unity of action and yet leave individual freedom not disturbed; to balance into harmonious proportions the mass and the man, the centripetal and centrifugal powers, as, by God's wondrous, living mechanism, they are balanced

in the worlds above. In the State we have done this more wisely than any nation heretofore. In the churches it remains yet to do. But man is equal to all which God appoints for him. His desires are ever proportionate to his duty and his destinies. The strong cry of the nations for liberty, a craving as of hungry men for bread and water, shows what liberty is worth, and what it is destined to do. Allow freedom to think, and there will be truth; freedom to act, and we shall have heroic works; freedom to live and be, and we shall have love to men and love to God. The world's history proves that, and our own history. Jesus, our model man, was the freest the world ever saw.

Let it be remembered that every truth is of God, and will lead to good and good only. Truth is the seed whereof welfare is the fruit; for every grain thereof we plant some one shall reap a whole harvest of welfare. A lie is "of the devil," and must lead to want, and woe, and death, ending at last in a storm where it rains tears and perhaps blood. Have freedom, and you will sow new truth to reap its satisfaction; submit to thralldom, and you sow lies to reap the death they bear. A Christian church should be the home of the soul, where it enjoys the largest liberty of the sons of God. If fettered elsewhere, here let us be free. Christ is the liberator; he came not to drive slaves, but to set men free. The churches of old did their greatest work, when there was most freedom in those churches.

Here too should the spirit of devotion be encouraged; the soul of man communing with his God in aspirations after purity and truth, in resolutions for goodness, and piety, and a manly life. These are a

prayer. The fact that men freely hold truths in common, great truths and universal; that unitedly they lift up their souls to God seeking instruction of Him; this will prove the strongest bond between man and man. It seems to me that the Protestant churches have not fully done justice to the sentiment of worship; that in taking care of the head we have forgotten the heart. To think truth is the worship of the head; to do noble works of usefulness and charity the worship of the will; to feel love and trust in man and God is the glad worship of the heart. A Christian church should be broad enough for all; should seek truth and promote piety, that both together might toil in good works.

Here should be had the best instruction which can be commanded; the freest, truest, and most manly voice; the mind most conversant with truth; the eloquence of a heart that runs over with goodness, whose faith is unfaltering in truth, justice, purity, and love; a faith in God, whose charity is living love to men, even the sinful and the base. Teaching is the breathing of one man's inspiration into another, a most real thing amongst real men. In a church there should be instruction for the young. God appoints the father and mother the natural teachers of children; above all is it so in their religious culture. But there are some who cannot, many who will not, fulfil this trust. Hence it has been found necessary for wise and good men to offer their instruction to such. In this matter it is religion we need more than theology, and of this it is not mere traditions and mythologies we are to teach, the anile tales of a rude people in a dark age, things our pupils will do well to forget soon as they are men, and which they will have small rea-

son to thank us for obscuring their minds withal; but it is the great, everlasting truths of religion which should be taught, enforced by examples of noble men, which tradition tells of, or the present age affords, all this to be suited to the tender years of the child. Christianity should be represented as human, as man's nature in its true greatness; religion shown to be beautiful, a real duty corresponding to man's deepest desire, that as religion affords the deepest satisfaction to man, so it is man's most universal want. Christ should be shown to men as he was, the manliest of men, the most divine because the most human. Children should be taught to respect their nature; to consider it as the noblest of all God's works; to know that perfect truth and goodness are demanded of them, and by that only can they be worthy men; taught to feel that God is present in Boston, and to-day, as much as ever in Jerusalem in the time of Jesus. They should be taught to abhor the public sins of our times, but to love and imitate its great examples of nobleness, and practical religion, which stand out amid the mob of worldly pretenders in this day.

Then, too, if one of our members falls into unworthy ways, is it not the duty of some one to speak with him, not as with authority to command, but with affection to persuade? Did any one of you ever address an erring brother on the folly of his ways with manly tenderness, and try to charm him back, and find a cold repulse? If a man is in error he will be grateful to one that tells him so; will learn most from men who make him ashamed of his littleness of life. In this matter it seems many a good man comes short of his duty.

There is yet another way in which a church should



act on its own household, and that is by direct material help in time of need. There is the eternal distinction of the strong and the weak, which cannot be changed. But as things now go there is another inequality not of God's appointment, but of man's perversity, the distinction of rich and poor — of men bloated by superfluous wealth and men starving and freezing from want. You know and I know how often the strong abuse their strength, exerting it solely for themselves and to the ruin of the weak; we all know that such are reckoned great in the world, though they may have grown rich solely by clutching at what others earned. In Christianity, and before the God of justice, all men are brothers; the strong are so that they may help the weak. As a nation chooses its wisest men to manage its affairs for the nation's good, and not barely their own, so God endows Charles or Samuel with great gifts that they may also bless all men thereby. If they use those powers solely for their pleasure, then are they false before men; false before God. It is said of the church of the Friends that no one of their number has ever received the charity of an almshouse, or for a civil offense been shut up in a jail. If the poor forsake a church, be sure that the church forsook God long before.

But the church must have an action on others out of its pale. If a man or a society of men have a truth, they hold it not for themselves alone, but for all men. The solitary thinker who in a moment of ecstatic action in his closet at midnight discovers a truth, discovers it for all the world and for eternity. A Christian church ought to love to see its truths extend; so it should put them in contact with the



opinions of the world, not with excess of zeal or lack of charity.

A Christian church should be a means of reforming the world, of forming it after the pattern of Christian ideas. It should therefore bring up the sentiments of the times, the ideas of the times, and the action of the times, to judge them by the universal standard. In this way it will learn much and be a living church, that grows with the advance of men's sentiments, ideas and actions, and while it keeps the good of the past will lose no brave spirit of the present day. It can teach much; now moderating the fury of men, then quickening their sluggish steps. We expect the sins of commerce to be winked at in the street; the sins of the State to be applauded on election days and in Congress, or on the Fourth of July; we are used to hear them called the righteousness of the nation. There they are often measured by the avarice or the ambition of greedy men. You expect them to be tried by passion, which looks only to immediate results and partial ends. Here they are to be measured by conscience and reason, which look to permanent results and universal ends; to be looked at with reference to the laws of God, the everlasting ideas on which alone is based the welfare of the world. Here they are to be examined in the light of Christianity itself. If the church be true, many things which seem gainful in the street and expedient in the senate-house, will here be set down as wrong, and all gain which comes therefrom seem to be but a loss. If there be a public sin in the land, if a lie invade the State, it is for the Church to give the alarm; it is here that it may war on lies and sins; the more widely they are believed in and practised, the more are they deadly,

the more to be opposed. Here let no false idea or false action of the public go without exposure and rebuke. But let no noble heroism of the times, no noble man pass by without due honor. If it is a good thing to honor dead saints and the heroism of our fathers; it is a better thing to honor the saints of to-day, the live heroism of men who do the battle, when that battle is all around us. I know a few such saints, here and there a hero of that stamp, and I will not wait till they are dead and classic before I call them so and honor them as such, for

"To side with truth is noble when we share her wretched crust,  
Ere her cause bring fame and profit and 'tis prosperous to be  
just;

Then it is the brave man chooses, while the coward stands  
aside,

Doubting in his abject spirit, till his Lord is crucified,  
And the multitude make virtue of the faith they once denied;  
For humanity sweeps onward; where today the martyr stands,  
On the morrow crouches Judas, with the silver in his hands;  
Far in front the cross stands ready, and the crackling fagots  
burn,

While the hooting mob of yesterday in silent awe return  
To glean up the scattered ashes into History's golden urn."

Do you not see that if a man have a new truth, it must be reformatory and so create an outcry? It will seem destructive as the farmer's plough; like that, it is so to tares and thistles, but the herald of the harvest none the less. In this way a Christian church should be a society for promoting true sentiments and ideas. If it would lead, it must go before men; if it would be looked up to, it must stand high.

That is not all: it should be a society for the promotion of good works. We are all beneath our idea, and therefore transgressors before God. Yet He gives us the rain, the snow and the sun. It falls on

me as well as on the field of my neighbor, who is a far juster man. How can we repent, cast our own sins behind us, outgrow and forget them, better than by helping others to work out their salvation? We are all brothers before God. Mutually needful we must be; mutually helpful we should be. Here are the ignorant that ask our instruction, not with words only, but with the prayer of their darkness, far more suppliant than speech. I never see an ignorant man younger than myself, without a feeling of self-reproach, for I ask, "What have I been doing to suffer him to grow up in nakedness of mind?" Every man, born in New England, who does not share the culture of this age, is a reproach to more than himself, and will at last actively curse those who began by deserting him. The Christian church should lead the movement for the public education of the people.

Here are the needy who ask not so much your gold, your bread, or your cloth, as they ask also your sympathy, respect, and counsel; that you assist them to help themselves, that they may have gold won by their industry, not begged out of your benevolence. It is justice more than charity they ask. Every beggar, every pauper, born and bred amongst us, is a reproach to us, and condemns our civilization. For how has it come to pass that in a land of abundance here are men, for no fault of their own, born into want, living in want, and dying of want? and that, while we pretend to a religion which says all men are brothers! There is a horrid wrong somewhere.

Here too are the drunkard, the criminal, the abandoned person, sometimes the foe of society, but far oftener the victim of society. Whence come the tenants of our almshouses, jails, the victims of vice

in all our towns? Why, from the lowest rank of the people; from the poorest and most ignorant. Say rather from the most neglected, and the public sin is confessed, and the remedy hinted at. What have the strong been doing all this while, that the weak have come to such a state? Let them answer for themselves.

Now for all these ought a Christian church to toil. It should be a church of good works; if it is a church of good faith it will be so. Does not Christianity say the strong should help the weak? Does not that mean something? It once did. Has the Christian fire faded out from those words, once so marvelously bright? Look round you, in the streets of your own Boston! See the ignorant, men and women with scarce more than the stature of men and women; boys and girls growing up in ignorance and the low civilization which comes thereof, the barbarians of Boston. Their character will one day be a blot and a curse to the nation, and who is to blame? Why, the ablest and best men, who might have had it otherwise if they would. Look at the poor, men of small ability, weak by nature, born into a weak position, therefore doubly weak; men whom the strong use for their purpose, and then cast them off as we throw away the rind of an orange after we have drunk its generous juice. Behold the wicked, so we call the weak men that are publicly caught in the cobweb of the law; ask why they became wicked; how we have aimed to reform them; what we have done to make them respect themselves, to believe in goodness, in man and God? and then say if there is not something for Christian men to do, something for a Christian church to do. Every almshouse in Massachusetts shows that the



churches have not done their duty, that the Christians lie lies when they call Jesus "Master" and men "brothers." Every jail is a monument, on which it is writ in letters of iron that we are still heathens, and the gallows, black and hideous, the embodiment of death, the last argument a "Christian" state offers to the poor wretches it trained up to be criminals, stands there, a sign of our infamy; and while it lifts its horrid arm to crush the life out of some miserable man, whose blood cries to God against Cain in the nineteenth century, it lifts that same arm as an index of our shame.

Is that all? Oh, no! Did not Jesus say, resist not evil — with evil? Is not war the worst form of that evil; and is there on earth a nation so greedy of war; a nation more reckless of provoking it; one where the war-horse so soon conducts his foolish rider into fame and power? The "heathen" Chinese might send their missionaries to America, and teach us to love men. Is that all? Far from it. Did not Christ say, whatsoever you would that men should do unto you, do you even so unto them; and are there not three million brothers of yours and mine in bondage here, the hopeless sufferers of a savage doom; debarred from the civilization of our age, the barbarians of the nineteenth century; shut out from the pretended religion of Christendom, the heathens of a Christian land; chained down from the liberty inalienable in man, the slaves of a Christian republic? Does not a cry of indignation ring out from every legislature in the north; does not the press war with its million throats, and a voice of indignation go up from east and west, out from the hearts of freemen? Oh, no. There is none of that cry against the mightiest sin



of this age. The rock of Plymouth, sanctified by the feet which led a nation's way to freedom's large estate, provokes no more voice than the rottenest stone in all the mountains of the West. The few that speak a manly word for truth and everlasting right, are called fanatics; bid be still, lest they spoil the market. Great God! and has it come to this, that men are silent over such a sin? 'Tis even so. Then it must be that every church which dares assume the name of Christ, that dearest name to men, thunders and lightens on this hideous wrong! That is not so. The Church is dumb, while the State is only silent; while the servants of the people are only asleep, "God's ministers" are dead!

In the midst of all these wrongs and sins, the crimes of men, society, and the State, amid popular ignorance, pauperism, crime and war, and slavery too — is the Church to say nothing, do nothing; nothing for the good of such as feel the wrong, nothing to save them who do the wrong? Men tell us so, in word and deed; that way alone is "safe!" If I thought so, I would never enter the church but once again, and then to bow my shoulders to their manliest work, to heave down its strong pillars, arch and dome, and roof and wall, steeple and tower, though like Samson I buried myself under the ruins of that temple which profaned the worship of God most high, of God most loved. I would do this in the name of man; in the name of Christ I would do it; yes, in the dear and blessed name of God.

It seems to me that a church which dares name itself Christian, the church of the Redeemer, which aspires to be a true church, must set itself about all this business, and be not merely a church of theology,

but of religion; not of faith only, but of works; a just church by its faith bringing works into life. It should not be a church termagant, which only peevishly scolds at sin, in its anile way; but a church militant against every form of evil, which not only censures, but writes out on the walls of the world the brave example of a Christian life, that all may take pattern therefrom. Thus only can it become the church triumphant. If a church were to waste less time in building its palaces of theological speculation, palaces mainly of straw, and based upon the chaff, erecting air-castles and fighting battles to defend those palaces of straw, it would surely have more time to use in the practical good works of the day. If it thus made a city free from want and ignorance and crime, I know I vent a heresy, I think it would be quite as Christian an enterprise as though it restored all the theology of the dark ages; quite as pleasing to God. A good sermon is a good thing, no doubt, but its end is not answered by its being preached; even by its being listened to and applauded; only by its awakening a deeper life in the hearers. But in the multitude of sermons there is danger lest the bare hearing thereof be thought a religious duty, not a means, but an end, and so our Christianity vanish in words. What if every Sunday afternoon the most pious and manly of our number, who saw fit, resolved themselves into a committee of the whole for practical religion, and held not a formal meeting, but one more free, sometimes for the purpose of devotion, the practical work of making ourselves better Christians, nearer to one another, and sometimes that we might find means to help such as needed help, the poor, the ignorant, the intemperate, and the wicked? Would it not be a work

profitable to ourselves, and useful to others weaker than we? For my own part I think there are no ordinances of religion like good works; no day too sacred to help my brother in; no Christianity like a practical love of God shown by a practical love of men. Christ told us that if we had brought our gift to the very altar, and there remembered our brother had cause of complaint against us, we must leave the divine service, and pay the human service first. If my brother be in slavery, in want, in ignorance, in sin, and I can aid him and do not, he has much against me and God can better wait for my prayer than my brother for my help.

The saints of olden time perished at the stake; they hung on gibbets; they agonized upon the rack; they died under the steel of the tormentor. It was the heroism of our fathers' day that swam the unknown seas; froze in the woods; starved with want and cold; fought battles with the red right hand. It is the sainthood and heroism of our day that toils for the ignorant, the poor, the weak, the oppressed, the wicked. Yes, it is our saints and heroes who fight fighting; who contend for the slave, and his master too, for the drunkard, the criminal; yes, for the wicked or the weak in all their forms. It is they that with weapons of heavenly proof fight the great battle for the souls of men. Though I detest war in each particular fiber of my heart, yet I honor the heroes among our fathers who fought with bloody hand; peacemakers in a savage way, they were faithful to the light; the most inspired can be no more, and we, with greater light, do, it may be, far less. I love and venerate the saints of old; men who dared step in front of their age; accepted Christianity when it cost something to be a Christian,

because it meant something; they applied Christianity, so far as they knew it, to the lies and sins of their times, and won a sudden and a fiery death. But the saints and heroes of this day, who draw no sword, whose right hand is never bloody, who burn in no fires of wood or sulphur, nor languish briefly on the hasty cross; the saints and heroes who, in a worldly world, dare to be men; in an age of conformity and selfishness, speak for truth and man, living for noble aims; men who will swear to no lies howsoever popular; who will honor no sins, though never so profitable, respected, and ancient; men who count Christ not their master, but teacher, friend, brother, and strive like him to practise all they pray; to incarnate and make real the Word of God,—these men I honor far more than the saints of old. I know their trials, I see their dangers, I appreciate their sufferings, and since the day when the man on Calvary bowed his head, bidding persecution farewell with his “Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do,” I find no such saints and heroes as live now! They win hard fare, and hard toil. They lay up shame and obloquy. Theirs is the most painful of martyrdoms. Racks and fagots soon waft the soul to God, stern messengers but swift. A boy could bear that passage, the martyrdom of death. But the temptation of a long life of neglect, and scorn, and obloquy, and shame, and want, and desertion by false friends; to live blameless though blamed, cut off from human sympathy, that is the martyrdom of to-day. I shed no tears for such martyrs. I shout when I see one; I take courage and thank God for the real saints, prophets, and heroes of to-day. In another age, men shall be proud of these puritans and pilgrims of this day. Churches shall glory in their names and



celebrate their praise in sermon and in song. Yea, though now men would steal the rusty sword from underneath the bones of a saint or hero long deceased, to smite off therewith the head of a new prophet, that ancient hero's son; though they would gladly crush the heart out of him with the tombstones they piled up for great men, dead and honored now; yet in some future day, that mob, penitent, baptized with a new spirit, like drunken men returned to sanity once more, shall search through all this land for marble white enough to build a monument to that prophet whom their fathers slew; they shall seek through all the world for gold of fineness fit to chronicle such names. I cannot wait; but I will honor such men now, not adjourn the warning of their voice, and the glory of their example, till another age! The Church may cast out such men; burn them with the torments of an age too refined in its cruelty to use coarse fagots and the vulgar ax! It is no loss to these men; but the ruin of the Church. I say the Christian church of the nineteenth century must honor such men, if it would do a church's work; must take pains to make such men as these, or it is a dead church, with no claim on us, except that we bury it. A true church will always be the church of martyrs. The ancients commenced every great work with a victim. We do not call it so; but the sacrifice is demanded, got ready, and offered by unconscious priests long ere the enterprise succeeds. Did not Christianity begin with a martyrdom?

In this way, by gaining all the truth of the age in thought or action, by trying public opinions with its own brave ideas, by promoting good works, applying a new truth to an old error, and with unpopular right-



eousness overcoming each popular sin, the Christian church should lead the civilization of the age. The leader looks before, goes before, and knows where he is going; knows the way thither. It is only on this condition that he leads at all. If the church by looking after truth, and receiving it when it comes, be in unison with God, it will be in unison with all science, which is only the thought of God translated from the facts of nature into the words of men. In such a case, the church will not fear philosophy, nor in the face of modern science aim to reëstablish the dreams and fables of a ruder day. It will not lack new truth, daring only to quote, nor be obliged to sneak behind the inspired words of old saints as its only fortress, for it will have words just as truly inspired, dropping from the golden mouths of saints and prophets now. For leaders it will look not back, but forth; will fan the first faint sparkles of that noble fire just newly kindled from the skies; not smother them in the ashes of fires long spent; not quench them with holy water from Jordan or the Nile. A church truly Christian, professing Christ as its model man, and aiming to stand in the relation he stood, must lead the way in moral enterprises, in every work which aims directly at the welfare of man. There was a time when the Christian churches, as a whole, held that rank. Do they now? Not even the Quakers — perhaps the last sect that abandoned it. A prophet, filled with love of man and love of God, is not therein at home. I speak a sad truth, and I say it in sorrow. But look at the churches of this city: do they lead the Christian movements of this city — the temperance movement, the peace movement, the movement for the freedom of men, for education, the movement to make society more just, more

wise and good, the great religious movement of these times — for, hold down our eyelids as we will, there is a religious movement at this day on foot, such as even New England never saw before; — do they lead in these things? Oh, no, not at all. That great Christian orator, one of the noblest men New England has seen in this century, whose word has even now gone forth to the nations beyond the sea, while his spirit has gone home to his Father, when he turned his attention to the practical evils of our time and our land, and our civilization, vigorously applying Christianity to life, why, he lost favor in his own little sect. They feared him, soon as his spirit looked over their narrow walls, aspiring to lead men to a better work. I know men can now make sectarian capital out of the great name of Channing, so he is praised; perhaps praised loudest by the very men who then cursed him by their gods. Ay, by their gods he was accursed! The churches lead the Christian movements of these times? — why, has there not just been driven out of this city, and out of this State, a man conspicuous in all these movements, after five and twenty years of noble toil; driven out because he was conspicuous in them! You know it is so, and you know how and by whom he is thus driven out.<sup>1</sup>

Christianity is humanity; Christ is the Son of man; the manliest of men; humane as a woman; pious and hopeful as a prayer; but brave as man's most daring thought. He has led the world in morals and religion for eighteen hundred years, only because he was the manliest man in it; the humanest and bravest man in it, and hence the divinest. He may lead it eighteen hundred years more, for we are bid believe that God can never make again a greater man; no, none so

great. But the churches do not lead men therein, for they have not his spirit; neither that womanliness which wept over Jerusalem, nor that manliness which drew down fire enough from heaven to light the world's altars for well nigh two thousand years.

There are many ways in which Christ may be denied:—one is that of the bold blasphemer, who, out of a base and haughty heart mocks, scoffing at that manly man, and spits upon the nobleness of Christ. There are few such deniers; my heart mourns for them. But they do little harm. Religion is so dear to men, no scoffing word can silence that, and the brave soul of this young Nazarene has made itself so deeply felt that scorn and mockery of him are but an icicle held up against the summer's sun. There is another way to deny him, and that is:—to call him Lord, and never do his bidding; to stifle free minds with his words; and with the authority of his name to cloak, to mantle, screen, and consecrate the follies, errors, sins of men. From this we have much to fear.

The church that is to lead this century will not be a church creeping on all fours; mewling and whining, its face turned down, its eyes turned back. It must be full of the brave, manly spirit of the day, keeping also the good of times past. There is a terrific energy in this age, for man was never so much developed, so much the master of himself before. Great truths, moral and political, have come to light. They fly quickly. The iron prophet of types publishes his visions, of weal or woe, to the near and far. This marvelous age has invented steam, and the magnetic telegraph, apt symbols of itself, before which the miracles of fable are but an idle tale. It demands, as never before, freedom for itself, usefulness in its institu-

tions; truth in its teachings, and beauty in its deeds. Let a church have that freedom, that usefulness, truth, and beauty, and the energy of this age will be on its side. But the church which did for the fifth century, or the fifteenth, will not do for this. What is well enough at Rome, Oxford, or Berlin, is not well enough for Boston. It must have our ideas, the smell of our ground, and have grown out of the religion in our soul. The freedom of America must be there before this energy will come; the wisdom of the nineteenth century before its science will be on the churches' side, else that science will go over to the "infidels."

Our churches are not in harmony with what is best in the present age. Men call their temples after their old heroes and saints — John, Paul, Peter, and the like. But we call nothing else after the old names; a school of philosophy would be condemned if called Aristotelian, Platonic, or even Baconian. We out-travel the past in all but this. In the church it seems taught there is no progress unless we have all the past on our back; so we despair of having men fit to call churches by. We look back and not forward. We think the next saint must talk Hebrew like the old ones, and repeat the same mythology. So when a new prophet comes we only stone him.

A church that believes only in past inspiration will appeal to old books as the standard of truth and source of light; will be antiquarian in its habits; will call its children by the old names; and war on the new age, not understanding the man-child born to rule the world. A church that believes in inspiration now will appeal to God; try things by reason and conscience; aim to surpass the old heroes; baptize its children with a new spirit, and using the present age will lead public opin-



ion, and not follow it. Had Christ looked back for counsel, he might have founded a church fit for Abraham or Isaac to worship in, not for the ages to come, or the age then. He that feels he is near to God, does not fear to be far from men; if before, he helps lead them on; if above, to lift them up. Let us get all we can from the Hebrews and others of old time, and that is much; but still let us be God's free men, not the Gibeonites of the past.

Let us have a church that dares imitate the heroism of Jesus; seek inspiration as he sought it; judge the past as he; act on the present like him; pray as he prayed; work as he wrought; live as he lived. Let our doctrines and our forms fit the soul, as the limbs fit the body, growing out of it, growing with it. Let us have a church for the whole man: truth for the mind; good works for the hands; love for the heart; and for the soul, that aspiring after perfection, that unfaltering faith in God which, like lightning in the clouds, shines brightest when elsewhere it is most dark. Let our church fit man, as the heavens fit the earth.

In our day men have made great advances in science, commerce, manufactures, in all the arts of life. We need, therefore, a development of religion corresponding thereto. The leading minds of the age ask freedom to inquire; not merely to believe, but to know; to rest on facts. A great spiritual movement goes swiftly forward. The best men see that religion is religion; theology is theology, and not religion; that true religion is a very simple affair, and the popular theology a very foolish one; that the Christianity of Christ is not the Christianity of the street, or the State, or the churches; that Christ is not the model



man, only "imputed" as such. These men wish to apply good sense to matters connected with religion; to apply Christianity to life, and make the world a better place, men and women fitter to live in it. In this way they wish to get a theology that is true; a mode of religion that works, and works well. If a church can answer these demands, it will be a live church; leading the civilization of the times, living with all the mighty life of this age, and nation. Its prayers will be a lifting up of the hearts in noble men towards God, in search of truth, goodness, piety. Its sacraments will be great works of reform, institutions for the comfort and the culture of men. Let us have a church in which religion, goodness towards men and piety towards God, shall be the main thing; let us have a degree of that suited to the growth and demands of this age. In the middle ages, men had erroneous conceptions of religion, no doubt; yet the Church led the world. When she wrestled with the State, the State came undermost to the ground. See the results of that supremacy — all over Europe there arose the cloister, halls of learning for the chosen few, minister, dome, cathedral, miracles of art, each costing the wealth of a province. Such was the embodiment of their ideas of religion, the prayers of a pious age done in stone, a psalm petrified as it rose from the world's mouth; a poor sacrifice, no doubt, but the best they knew how to offer. Now if men were to engage in religion as in politics, commerce, arts, if the absolute religion, the Christianity of Christ, were applied to life with all the might of this age, as the Christianity of the Church was then applied, what a result should we not behold! We should build up a great State with unity in the nation, and freedom in the people; a State

where there was honorable work for every hand, bread for all mouths, clothing for all backs, culture for every mind, and love and faith in every heart. Truth would be our sermon, drawn from the oldest of Scriptures, God's writing there in nature, here in man; works of daily duty would be our sacrament; prophets inspired of God would minister the word, and piety send up her psalm of prayer, sweet in its notes, and joyfully prolonged. The noblest monument to Christ, the fairest trophy of religion, is a noble people, where all are well fed and clad, industrious, free, educated, manly, pious, wise, and good.

Some of you may now remember, how ten months and more ago, I first came to this house to speak. I shall remember it for ever. In those rainy Sundays the very skies looked dark. Some came doubtfully, uncertain, looking around, and hoping to find courage in another's hope. Others came with clear glad face; openly, joyfully, certain they were right; not fearing to meet the issue; not afraid to be seen meeting it. Some came, perhaps, not used to worship in a church, but not the less welcome here; some mistaking me for a destroyer, a doubter, a denier of all truth, a scoffer, an enemy to man and God. I wonder not at that. Misguided men had told you so, in sermon and in song; in words publicly printed and published without shame; in the covert calumny, slyly whispered in the dark. Need I tell you my feelings; how I felt at coming to the town made famous by great men, Mayhew, Chauncy, Buckminster, Kirkland, Holley, Pierpont, Channing, Ware — names dear and honored in my boyish heart. Need I tell you how I felt at sight of the work which stretched out before me?

Do you wonder that I asked, Who is sufficient for these things? and said, Alas, not I, Thou knowest, Lord! But some of you told me you asked not the wisdom of a wiser man, the ability of one stronger, but only that I should do what I could. I came, not doubting that I had some truths to say; not distrusting God, nor man, nor you; distrustful only of myself. I feared I had not the power, amid the dust and noises of the day, to help you see and hear the great realities of religion as they appeared to me; to help you feel the life of real religion, as in my better moments I have felt its truth. But let that pass. As I came here from Sunday to Sunday, when I began to feel your spirits prayed with mine a prayer for truth and life; as I looked down into your faces, thoughtful and almost breathless, I forgot my self-distrust; I saw the time was come; that, feebly as I know I speak, my best thoughts were ever the most welcome. I saw the harvest was plenteous indeed: but the preacher, I feel it still, was all unworthy of his work.

Brothers and Sisters, let us be true to our sentiments and ideas. Let us not imitate another's form unless it symbolize a truth to us. We must not affect to be singular, but not fear to be alone. Let us not foolishly separate from our brothers elsewhere. Truth is yet before us, not only springing up out of the manly words of this Bible, but out of the ground; out of the heavens; out of man and God. Whole firmaments of truth hang ever o'er our heads, waiting the telescopic eye of the true-hearted see-er. Let us follow truth, in form, thought, or sentiment, wherever she may call. God's daughter cannot lead us from the path. The further on we go, the more we find. Had Columbus

turned back only the day before he saw the land, the adventure had been worse than lost.

We must practise a manly self-denial. Religion always demands that, but never more than when our brothers separate from us, and we stand alone. By our mutual love and mutual forbearance, we shall stand strong. With zeal for our common work, let us have charity for such as dislike us, such as oppose and would oppress us. Let us love our enemies, bless them that curse us, do good to them that hate us, and pray for such as spitefully use us. Let us overcome their evil speech with our own goodness. If others have treated us ill, called us unholy names, and mocked at us, let us forgive it all, here and now, and help them also to forget and outgrow that temper which bade them treat us so. A kind answer is fittest rebuke to an unkind word.

If we have any truth it will not be kept hid. It will run over the brim of our urn and water our brother's field. Were any truth to come down to us in advance from God, it were not that we might forestall the light, but shed it forth for all His children to walk by and rejoice in. "One candle will light a thousand" if it be itself lighted. Let our light shine before men so that they may see our good deeds, and themselves praise God by a manly life. This we owe to them as to ourselves. A noble thought and a mean man make a sorry union. Let our idea show itself in our life — that is preaching, right eloquent. Do this, we begin to do good to men, and though they should oppose us, and our work should fail, we shall have yet the approval of our own heart, the approval of God, be whole within ourselves, and one with Him.



Some of you are venerable men. I have wondered that a youthful ardor should have brought you here. Your silvery heads have seemed a benediction to my work. But most of you are young. I know it is no aping of a fashion that has brought you here. I have no eloquence to charm or please you with; I only speak right on. I have no reputation but a bad name in the churches. I know you came not idly, but seeking after truth. Give a great idea to an old man, and he carries it to his grave; give it to a young man, and he carries it to his life. It will bear both young and old through the grave and into eternal heaven beyond.

Young men and women, the duties of the world fall eminently on you. God confides to your hands the ark which holds the treasures of the age. On young shoulders He lays the burden of life. Yours is the period of passion; the period of enterprise and of work. It is by successive generations that mankind goes forward. The old, stepping into honorable graves, leave their places and the results they won to you. But departing they seem to say, as they linger and look back, Do ye greater than we have done! The young just coming into your homes seem to say, Instruct us to be nobler than yourselves! Your life is the answer to your children and your sires. The next generation will be as you make it. It is not the schools but the people's character that educates the child. Amid the trials, duties, dangers of your life, religion alone can guide you. It is not the world's eye that is on you, but God's; it is not the world's religion that will suffice you, but the religion of a man, which unites you with truth, justice, piety, goodness; yes, which makes you one with God.

Young men and women — you can make this church



a fountain of life to thousands of fainting souls. Yes, you can make this city nobler than city ever was before. A manly life is the best gift you can leave mankind; that can be copied for ever. Architects of your own weal or woe, your destiny is mainly in your own hands. It is no great thing to reject the popular falsehoods; little and perhaps not hard. But to receive the great sentiments and lofty truths of real religion, the Christianity of Christ; to love them, to live them in your business and your home, that is the greatest work of man. Thereby you partake of the spirit and nature of God; you achieve the true destiny for yourself; you help your brothers do the same.

When my own life is measured by the ideal of that young Nazarene, I know how little I deserve the name of Christian; none knows that fact so well as I. But you have been denied the name of Christian because you came here, asking me to come. Let men see that you have the reality, though they withhold the name. Your words are the least part of what you say to men. The foolish only will judge you by your talk; wise men by the general tenor of your life. Let your religion appear in your work and your play. Pray in your strongest hours. Practise your prayers. By fair-dealing, justice, kindness, self-control, and the great work of helping others while you help yourself, let your life prove a worship. These are the real sacraments and Christian communion with God, to which water and wine are only helps. Criticize the world not by censure only, but by the example of a great life. Shame men out of their littleness, not by making mouths, but by walking great and beautiful amongst them. You love God best when you love men most. Let your prayers be an uplifting of the

soul in thought, resolution, love, and the light thereof shall shine through the darkest hour of trouble. Have not the Christianity of the street; but carry Christ's Christianity there. Be noble men, then your works must needs be great and manly.

This is the first Sunday of a new year. What an hour for resolutions; what a moment for prayer! If you have sins in your bosom, cast them behind you now. In the last year, God has blessed us; blessed us all. On some his angels waited, robed in white, and brought new joys; here a wife, to bind men closer yet to Providence; and there a child, a new Messiah, sent to tell of innocence and heaven. To some his angels came clad in dark livery, veiling a joyful countenance with unpropitious wings, and bore away child, father, sister, wife, or friend. Still were they angels of good Providence, all God's own; and he who looks aright finds that they also brought a blessing, but concealed, and left it, though they spoke no word of joy. One day our weeping brother shall find that gift and wear it as a diamond on his breast.

The hours are passing over us, and with them the day. What shall the future Sundays be, and what the year? What we make them both. God gives us time. We weave it into life, such figures as we may, and wear it as we will. Age slowly rots away the gold we are set in, but the adamant soul lives on, radiant every way in the light streaming down from God. The genius of eternity, star-crowned, beautiful, and with prophetic eyes, leads us again to the gates of time, and gives us one more year, bidding us fill that golden cup with water as we can or will. There stand the dirty, fetid pools of worldliness and sin; curdled, and

mantled, film-covered, streaked, and striped with many a hue, they shine there, in the slanting light of new-born day. Around them stand the sons of earth and cry, Come hither; drink thou and be saved! Here fill thy golden cup! There you may seek to fill your urn; to stay your thirst. The deceitful element, roping in your hands, shall mock your lip. It is water only to the eye. Nay, show-water only unto men half-blind. But there, hard by, runs down the stream of life, its waters never frozen, never dry; fed by perennial dews falling unseen from God. Fill there thine urn, oh, brother-man, and thou shalt thirst no more for selfishness and crime, and faint no more amid the toil and heat of day; wash there, and the leprosy of sin, its scales of blindness, shall fall off, and thou be clean for ever. Kneel there and pray; God shall inspire thy heart with truth and love, and fill thy cup with never-ending joy!

### III

#### SOME ACCOUNT OF MY MINISTRY

“I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God.”  
ACTS xx. 27.

On the 22nd of January, 1845, at a meeting of gentlemen in Boston, which some of you very well remember, it was “*Resolved*, that the Rev. Theodore Parker shall have a chance to be heard in Boston.”

That resolution has been abundantly backed up by action; and I have had “a chance to be heard.” And this is not all: I have had a long and patient, a most faithful and abundant hearing. No man in the last eight years in New England has had so much. I mean to say, no minister in New England has done so much preaching, and had so much hearing. This is the result of your resolution, and your attempts to make your thought a thing.

As this seems likely to be the last time I shall stand within these walls, it is not improper that I should give some little account of my stewardship whilst here; and therefore you will pardon me if I speak considerably of myself,—a subject which has been before you a long time, very much in your eye, and I think also very much in your heart.

I must, in advance, ask your indulgence for the character of this sermon. I have but just returned from an expedition to Ohio, to lecture and to preach; whither I went weary and not well, and whence I have returned still more weary and no better. It is scarcely more than twenty-four hours since I came back, and accordingly but a brief time has been allowed me for

the composition of this sermon. For its manner and its matter, its substance and its form, therefore, I must ask your indulgence.

When I spoke to you for the first time on that dark, rainy Sunday, on the 16th of February, 1845, I had recently returned from Europe. I had enjoyed a whole year of leisure; it was the first and last I have ever had. I had employed that time in studying the people and institutions of Western Europe; their social, academical, political, and ecclesiastical institutions. And that leisure gave me an opportunity to pause, and review my scheme of philosophy and theology; to compare my own system with that of eminent men, as well living as dead, in all parts of Europe, and see how the scheme would fit the wants of Christendom, Protestant and Catholic. It was a very fortunate thing that at the age of three and thirty I was enabled to pause, and study myself anew; to re-examine what I had left behind me, and recast my plans for what of life might yet remain.

You remember, when you first asked me to come here and preach, I doubted and hesitated, and at first said, No; for I distrusted my own ability to make my idea welcome at that time to any large body of men. In the country I had a small parish, very dear to me still, wherein I knew every man, woman, and child, and was well known to them: I knew the thoughts of such as had the habit of thinking. Some of them accepted my conclusions because they had entertained ideas like them before I did, perhaps before I was born. Others tolerated the doctrine because they liked the man, and the doctrine seemed part of him, and, if they took my ideas at all, took them for my sake. You, who knew

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little of me, must hear the doctrine before you could know the man; and, as you would know the doctrine only as I had power to set it forth in speech, I doubted if I should make it welcome. I had no doubt of the truth of my idea; none of its ultimate triumph. I felt certain that one day it would be "a flame in all men's hearts." I doubted only of its immediate success in my hands.

Some of you had not a very clear notion of my programme of principles. Most of you knew this,—that a strong effort was making to exclude me from the pulpits of New England; not on account of any charge brought against my character, but simply on account of the ideas which I presented; ideas which, as I claimed, were bottomed on the nature of man and the nature of God: my opponents claimed that they were not bottomed on the Bible. You thought that my doctrine was not fairly and scientifically met; that an attempt was making, not to put it down by reason, but to howl it down by force of ecclesiastical shouting; and that was true. And so you passed a resolve that Mr. Parker should have "a chance to be heard in Boston," because he had not a chance to be heard anywhere else, in a pulpit, except in the little village of West Roxbury.

It was a great principle, certainly, which was at stake; the great Protestant principle of free individuality of thought in matters of religion. And that, with most of you, was stronger than a belief in my peculiar opinions; far stronger than any personal fondness for me. Therefore your resolution was bottomed on a great idea.

My scheme of theology may be briefly told. There

are three great doctrines in it, relating to the idea of God, the idea of man, and of the connection or relation between God and man.

First, of the idea of God. I have taught the infinite perfection of God; that in God there are united all conceivable perfections,—the perfection of being, which is self-existence; the perfection of power, almightiness; the perfection of wisdom, all-knowingness; the perfection of conscience, all-righteousness; the perfection of the affections, all-lovingness; and the perfection of soul, all-holiness;—that He is perfect Cause of all that He creates, making everything from a perfect motive, of perfect material, for a perfect purpose, as a perfect means;—that He is perfect Providence also, and has arranged all things in His creation so that no ultimate and absolute evil shall befall anything which He has made;—that, in the material world, all is order without freedom, for a perfect end; and in the human world, the contingent forces of human freedom are perfectly known by God at the moment of creation, and so balanced together that they shall work out a perfect blessedness for each and for all His children.

That is my idea of God, and it is the foundation of all my preaching. It is the one idea in which I differ from the antichristian sects, and from every Christian sect. I know of no Christian or antichristian sect which really believes in the Infinite God. If the infinity of God appears in their synthetic definition of Deity, it is straightway brought to nothing in their analytic description of the divine character, and their historic account of His works and purposes.

Then, of the idea of man. I have taught that God gave mankind powers perfectly adapted to the purpose of God; that the body of man was just what God meant it to be; had nothing redundant, to be cut off sacramentally; was not deficient in anything, to be sacramentally agglutinated thereunto; and that the spirit of man was exactly such a spirit as the good God meant to make; redundant in nothing, deficient in nothing; requiring no sacramental amputation of an old faculty, no sacramental imputation of a new faculty from another tree; that the mind and conscience and heart and soul were exactly adequate to the function that God meant for them all; that they found their appropriate objects of satisfaction in the universe; and as there was food for the body,—all nature ready to serve it on due condition,—so there was satisfaction for the spirit, truth and beauty for the intellect, justice for the conscience; human beings — lover and maid, husband and wife, kith and kin, friend and friend, parent and child — for the affections; and God for the soul; that man can as naturally find satisfaction for his soul, which hungers after the infinite God, as for his heart, which hungers for a human friend, or for his mouth, which hungers for daily bread; that mankind no more needs to receive a miraculous revelation of things pertaining to religion than of things pertaining to housekeeping, agriculture, or manufactures; for God made the religious faculty as adequate to its function as the practical faculties for theirs.

In the development of man's faculties, I have taught that there has been a great progress of mankind,—outwardly shown in the increased power over nature, in the increase of comfort, art, science, literature; and this progress is just as obvious in religion as in agri-

culture or in housekeeping. The progress in man's idea of God is as remarkable as the progress in building ships; for, indeed, the difference between the popular conception of a jealous and angry God, who said His first word in the Old Testament, and His last word in the New Testament, and who will never speak again "till the last day," and then only damn to everlasting ruin the bulk of mankind,—the difference between that conception and the idea of the Infinite God is as great as the difference between the "dug-out" of a Sandwich Islander and a California clipper, that takes all the airs of heaven in its broad arms, and skims over the waters with the speed of wind. I see no limit to this general power of progressive development in man; none to man's power of religious development. The progress did not begin with Moses, nor end with Jesus. Neither of these great benefactors was a finality in benefaction. This power of growth, which belongs to human nature, is only definite in the historical forms already produced, but quite indefinite and boundless in its capabilities of future expansion.

In the human faculties, this is the order of rank: I have put the body and all its powers at the bottom of the scale; and then, of the spiritual powers, I put the intellect the lowest of all; conscience came next higher; the affections higher yet; and highest of all, I have put the religious faculty. Hence I have always taught that the religious faculty was the natural ruler in all this commonwealth of man; yet I would not have it a tyrant, to deprive the mind or the conscience or the affections of their natural rights. But the importance of religion, and its commanding power in every relation of life, that is what I have continually preached; and some of you will remember that the first sermon



I addressed to you was on this theme,— the absolute necessity of religion for safely conducting the life of the individual and the life of the State. I dwelt on both of these points,— religion for the individual, and religion for the State. You know very well I did not begin too soon. Yet I did not then foresee that it would soon be denied in America, in Boston, that there was any law of God higher than an Act of Congress.

Woman I have always regarded as the equal of man, — more nicely speaking, the equivalent of man; superior in some things, inferior in some other; inferior in the lower qualities, in bulk of body and bulk of brain; superior in the higher and nicer qualities, in the moral power of conscience, the loving power of affection, the religious power of the soul: equal, on the whole, and of course entitled to just the same rights as man; to the same rights of mind, body, and estate; the same domestic, social, ecclesiastical, and political rights as man, and only kept from the enjoyment of these by might, not right; yet herself destined one day to acquire them all. For, as in the development of man, the lower faculties come out and blossom first, and as accordingly, in the development of society, those persons who represent the lower powers first get elevated to prominence; so man, while he is wanting in the superior quality, possesses brute strength and brute intellect, and in virtue thereof has had the sway in the world. But as the finer qualities come later, and the persons who represent those finer qualities come later into prominence; so woman is destined one day to come forth and introduce a better element into the family, society, politics, and Church, and to bless us far more than the highest of men are yet aware. Out of that mine the fine gold is to be brought



which shall sanctify the Church, and save the State.

That is my idea of man; and you see how widely it differs from the popular ecclesiastical idea of him.

Then a word for the idea of the relation between God and man.

I. First, of this on God's part. God is perfect Cause and perfect Providence, Father and Mother of all men; and He loves each with all of His being, all of His almightiness, His all-knowingness, all-righteousness, all-lovingness, and all-holiness. He knew at the beginning all the future history of mankind, and of each man,—of Jesus of Nazareth and Judas Iscariot; and prepared for all, so that a perfect result shall be worked out at last for each soul. The means for the purposes of God in the human world are the natural powers of man, his faculties; those faculties which are fettered by instinct, and those also which are winged by free-will. Hence while, with my idea of God, I am sure of the end, and have asked of all men an infinite faith that the result would be brought out right by the forces of God,—with my idea of man, I have also pointed out the human means; and, while I was sure of the end, and called for divine faith, I have also been sure of the means, and called for human work. Here are two propositions: first, that God so orders things in His providence, that a perfect result shall be wrought out for each; and, second, that He gives a certain amount of freedom to every man. I believe both of these propositions; I have presented both as strongly as I could. I do not mean to say that I have logically reconciled these two propositions, with all their consequences, in my own mind, and still less to the minds of others. There may seem to be a contra-

diction. Perhaps I do not know how to reconcile the seeming contradiction, and yet I believe both propositions.

From this it follows that the history of the world is no astonishment to God; that the vice of a Judas, or the virtue of a Jesus, is not a surprise to Him. Error and sin are what stumbling is to a child; accidents of development, which will in due time be overcome. As the finite mother does not hate the sound and strong boy, who sometimes stumbles in learning to walk; nor the sound, but weak boy, who stumbles often; nor yet the crippled boy, who stumbles continually, and only stumbles; but as she seeks to help and teach all three, so the Infinite Mother of us all does not hate the well-born, who seldom errs; nor the ill-born, who often transgresses; nor yet hate the moral idiot, even the person that is born organized for kidnapping; but will, in the long run of eternity, bring all these safely home,— the first murderer and the last kidnapper, both reformed and blessed. Suffering for error and sin is a fact in this world. I make no doubt it will be a fact in all stages of development in the next world. But mark this: it is not from the anger or weakness of God that we suffer; it is for purposes worthy of His perfection and His love. Suffering is not a devil's malice, but God's medicine. I can never believe that evil is a finality with God.

II. Then see the relation on man's part. Providence is what God owes to man; and man has an absolutely inalienable right to the infinite providence of God. No sin ever can alienate and nullify that right. To say that it could, would seem to me blasphemy against the Most High God; for it would imply a lack of some element of perfection on God's part; a lack

of power, of wisdom, of justice, of love, or of holiness,—fidelity to Himself. It would make God finite, and not infinite.

Religion is what man owes to God, as God owes providence to man. And with me religion is something exceedingly wide, covering the whole surface, and including the whole depth of human life.

The internal part I have called piety. By that I mean, speaking synthetically, the love of God as God, with all the mind and conscience, heart and soul: speaking analytically, the love of truth and beauty, with the intellect; the love of justice, with the conscience; the love of persons, with the affections; the love of holiness, with the soul. For all these faculties find in God their perfect object,—the all-true, all-beautiful, all-just, all-loving, and all-holy God, the Father and Mother of all.

The more external part of religion I have called morality; that is, keeping all the natural laws which God has writ for the body and spirit, for mind and conscience and heart and soul; and I consider that it is just as much a part of religion to keep every law which God has writ in our frame, as it is to keep the Ten Commandments; and just as much our duty to keep the law which He has thus published in human nature, as if the voice of God spoke out of heaven, and said, "Thou shalt," and "Thou shalt not." Man's consciousness proclaims God's law. It is nature on which I have endeavored to bottom my teachings. Of course this morality includes the subordination of the body to the spirit, and, in the spirit, the subordination of the lower faculties to the higher; so that the religious element shall correct the partiality of affection, the coldness of justice, and the shortsightedness of intel-

lectual calculation ; and, still more, shall rule and keep in rank the appetites of the body. But in this the soul must not be a tyrant over the body ; for, as there is a holy spirit, so there is likewise a holy flesh ; all its natural appetites are sacred ; and the religious faculty is not to domineer over the mind, nor over the conscience, nor over the affections of man. All these powers are to be co-ordinated into one great harmony, where the parts are not sacrificed to the whole, nor the whole to any one part. So, in short, man's religious duty is to serve God by the normal use, development, and enjoyment of every limb of the body, every faculty of the spirit, every particle of power which we progressively acquire and possess over matter or over man.

The ordinances of that religion are, inwardly, prayer of penitence and aspiration, the joy and delight in God and His gifts ; and, outwardly, they are the daily works of life, by fire-side and street-side and field-side,—“the charities that soothe and heal and bless.” These are the ordinances, and I know no other.

Of course, to determine the religiousness of a man, the question is not merely — what does he believe ? but — has he been faithful to himself in coming to his belief ? It may be possible that a man comes to the conviction of atheism, but yet has been faithful to himself. It may be that the man believes the highest words taught by Jesus, and yet has been faithless to himself. It is a fact which deserves to be held up everlastingly before men, that religion begins in faithfulness to yourself. I have known men whom the world called infidels, and mocked at, who yet were faithful among the faithfulest. Their intellectual conclusions I would have trodden under my feet ; but



their faithfulness I would fall on my knees to do honor to.

Then the question is not how a man dies, but how he lives. It is very easy for a dying man to be opiated by the doctor and minister to such a degree that his mouth shall utter anything you will; and then, though he was the most hardened of wretches, you shall say "he died a saint!" The common notion of the value of a little snivelling and whimpering on a death-bed is too dangerous, as well as too poor, to be taught for science in the midst of the nineteenth century.

I have taken it for granted also, that religion gave to men the highest, dearest, and deepest of all enjoyments and delights; that it beautified every relation in human life, and shed the light of heaven into the very humblest house, into the lowliest heart, and cheered, and soothed, and blessed the very hardest lot and the most cruel fate in mortal life. This is not only my word, but your hearts bear witness to the truth of that teaching, and all human history will tell the same thing.

These have been the chief doctrines which I have set forth in a thousand forms. You see at once how very widely this differs from the common scheme of theology in which most of us were born and bred. There is a vast difference in the idea of God, of man, and of the relation between the two.

Of course I do not believe in a devil, eternal torment, nor in a particle of absolute evil in God's world or in God. I do not believe there ever was a miracle, or ever will be: everywhere I find law,—the constant mode of operation of the Infinite God. I do not believe in the miraculous inspiration of the Old Testament



or the New Testament. I do not believe that the Old Testament was God's first word, nor the New Testament His last. The Scriptures are no finality to me. Inspiration is a perpetual fact. Prophets and apostles did not monopolize the Father: He inspires men to-day as much as heretofore. In nature, also, God speaks for ever. Are not these flowers new words of God? Are not the fossils underneath our feet, hundreds of miles thick, old words of God, spoken millions of millions of years before Moses began to be?

I do not believe the miraculous origin of the Hebrew Church, or the Buddhist Church, or the Christian Church; nor the miraculous character of Jesus. I take not the Bible for my master, nor yet the Church; nor even Jesus of Nazareth for my master. I feel not at all bound to believe what any church says is true, nor what any writer in the Old or New Testament declares true; and I am ready to believe that Jesus taught, as I think, eternal torment, the existence of a devil, and that he himself should ere long come back in the clouds of heaven. I do not accept these things on his authority. I try all things by the human faculties,—intellectual things by the intellect, moral things by the conscience, affectional things by the affections, and religious things by the soul. Has God given us anything better than our nature? How can we serve Him and His purposes but by its normal use?

But, at the same time, I reverence the Christian Church for the great good it has done for mankind; I reverence the Mahometan Church for the good it has done,—a far less good. I reverence the Scriptures for every word of truth they teach,—and they are crowded with truth and beauty, from end to end. Above all men do I bow my face before that august

personage, Jesus of Nazareth, who seems to have had the strength of man and the softness of woman,—man's mighty, wide-grasping, reasoning, calculating, and poetic mind; and woman's conscience, woman's heart, and woman's faith in God. He is my best historic ideal of human greatness; not without errors, not without the stain of his times, and, I presume, of course not without sins,—for men without sins exist in the dreams of girls, not in real fact; you never saw such a one, nor I, and we never shall. But Jesus of Nazareth is my best historic ideal of a religious man, and revolutionizes the vulgar conception of human greatness. What are your Cæsars, Alexanders, Cromwells, Napoleons, Bacons, and Leibnitz, and Kant, and Shakespeare, and Milton even,—men of immense brain and will,—what are they all to this person of large and delicate intellect, of a great conscience, and heart and soul far mightier yet?

With such ideas of man, of God, and of the relation between them, how all things must look from my point of view! I cannot praise a man because he is rich. While I deplore the vulgar rage for wealth, and warn men against the popular lust of gold, which makes money the triune deity of so many men, I yet see the function of riches, and have probably preached in favor of national and individual accumulation thereof more than any other man in all New England, as I see the necessity of a material basis for the spiritual development of man; but I never honor a live man because he is rich, and should not think of ascribing to a dead one all the Christian virtues because he died with a large estate, and his faith, hope, and charity were only faith in money, hope for money, and love

of money. I should not think such a man entitled to the praise of all the Christian virtues.

And again, I should never praise or honor a man simply because he had a great office, nor because he had the praise of men; nor should I praise and honor a man because he had the greatest intellect in the world, and the widest culture of that intellect. I should take the intellect for what it was worth; but I should honor the just conscience of a man who carried a hod up the tallest ladder in Boston; I should honor the loving heart of a girl who went without her dinner to feed a poor boy; the faith in God which made a poor woman faithful to every daily duty, while poverty and sickness stared her in the face, and a drunken husband smote her in the heart,—a faith which conquered despair, and still kept loving on. I should honor any one of these things more than the intellect of Cæsar and Bacon and Hannibal all united into one; and you see why; because I put intellect at the bottom of the scale, and these higher faculties at the other end.

I put small value on the common “signs of religion.” Church-going is not morality: it is compliance with common custom. It may be grievous self-denial, and often is. Reading the Bible daily or weekly is not piety; it may help to it. The “sacraments” are no signs of religion to me, they are dispensations of water, of wine, of bread, and no more. I do not think a few hours of crying on a sick-bed proves that a notorious miser or voluptuary, a hard, worldly fellow, for fifty years, has been a saint all that time, any more than one mild day in March proves that there was no ice in Labrador all winter.

With such views, you see in what esteem I must be

held by society, Church, and State. I cannot be otherwise than hated. This is the necessity of my position,—that I must be hated; and, accordingly, I believe there is no living man in America so widely, abundantly, and deeply hated as I have been, and still continue to be. In the last twelve years I fear there has been more ecclesiastical preaching in the United States against me than against war and slavery. Those that hate any particular set of reformers hate me because I am with that particular set; with each and with all. I do not blame men for this; not so much as some others have done on my account. I pity very much more than I blame; not with the pity of contempt, I hope, but with the pity of appreciation, and with the pity of love. I see in the circumstances of men very much to palliate the offenses of their character; and I long ago learned not to hate men who hated me. It was not hard to learn; I began early,—I had a mother who taught me.

You know the actual condition of the American Church,—I mean all the ecclesiastical institutions of the land—that it has a theology which cannot stand the test of reason; and accordingly it very wisely resolved to throw reason overboard before it began its voyage. You know that all Christendom, with a small exception, professes a belief in the devil, in eternal torment; and of course all Christendom, with scarce any exception, professes a belief in a God who has those qualities which created a devil and eternal torment.

You know the morality of the American Church. The clergy are a body of kindly and charitable men. Some virtues, which are not very easy to possess, they have in advance of any other class of men amongst



us; they are the virtues which belong to their position. I believe they are, as a body, a good deal better than their creed. I know men often say a man is not so good as his creed; I never knew a minister who was half so bad as Calvinism. I surely have no prejudice against John Calvin, when I say he was an uncommonly hard man, with a great head and a rigorous conscience; but John Calvin himself was a great deal better than the Calvinistic idea of God. I should give up in despair with that idea of God: I should not cast myself on His mercy, for there would be no mercy in Him.

But the preaching of the churches is not adapted to produce the higher kinds of morality. Certain humble but needful forms thereof the church helps, and very much indeed. On the whole it blocks the wheels of society backwards, so that society does not run down hill; but on the other hand, it blocks them forward, so that it is harder to get up; and, while you must run over the church to get far down hill, you must also run over it to get up. It favors certain lower things of morality: higher things it hinders.

Here are two great forms of vice,—natural forms. One comes from the period of passion; and, when it is fully ripe, it is the vice of the debauchee: the other comes from the period of calculation; and, when it is fully rotten, it is the sin of the hunker.<sup>1</sup> Now, the churches are not very severe on the first kind of vice. They are very severe on unpopular degrees of it, not on the popular degree. They do service, however, in checking the unpopular degree. But the sin of the hunkers, I think, the churches uniformly uphold and support. The popular sins of



calculation are pretty sure to get the support of the pulpit on their side. Why so? They can pay for it in money and in praise. I know but few exceptions to that rule.

Then there are certain other merely ecclesiastical vices, mere conventional vices; not sins, not transgressions of any natural law. These the churches regard as great sins. Such are doubt and disbelief of ecclesiastical doctrine; neglect of ecclesiastical ordinances,—of the “Sabbath day,” as it is called; neglect of the great bodily sacrament, church-going, and the like. All these offenses the churches preach against with great power.

Accordingly the churches hinder the highest morality, favor the lower. The highest morality is thought superfluous in society, contemptible in politics, and an abomination in the church.

Just now I learned through the newspapers that John Wesley’s pulpit has been brought to America, and it is thought a great gain. But if John Wesley’s voice, declaring aloud that slavery is “the sum of all villanies,” were to be brought, it would presently be excommunicated from the Methodist Church. I understand that the chair in which the “Shepherd of Salisbury Plains” once sat, has likewise arrived in America; and the tub, I think it is, which belonged to the “Dairyman’s Daughter,” has also immigrated; and these will be thought much more valuable ecclesiastical furniture than the piety of the Shepherd of Salisbury Plains, and the self-denial of the Dairyman’s Daughter. It is popular to sprinkle babies with water from the Jordan; unpopular to baptize men with the spirit of Jesus, and with fire from the Holy Ghost.

My preaching has been mainly positive, of truth and duty in their application to life: but sometimes negative and critical, even militant. This was unavoidable; for I must show how my scheme would work when brought face to face with the Church, society, and the State.

So I have sometimes preached against the evil doctrines of the popular theology; its false idea of God, of man, and of religion. This popular theology contains many excellent things: but its false things, taken as a whole, are the greatest curse of the nation; a greater curse than drunkenness, than the corruption of political parties; greater than slavery. It stands in the way of every advance. Would you reform the criminal,—along comes theology, with its “Whoso sheddeth man’s blood, by man shall his blood be shed.” Would you improve the Church,—men say, “You must listen to the Church, but not reform it; it must reform you, and not you it.” Would you elevate woman to her rights,—the popular theology quotes St. Paul till you are almost sick of his name. Would you refuse obedience to a wicked law, and quote Jesus, and every great martyr from the beginning of the world,—the popular theology meets you with “Whoso resisteth the powers that be, resisteth the ordinance of God.” If you wish to abolish slavery,—ministers come out with the old story of Ham and Noah, and justify American bondage on an old mythology, writ three thousand years ago, nobody knows where, nobody knows by whom, nobody knows for what purpose. All the garments possessed by the children of Shem and Japheth are too scant to hide the shame of the popular theology. At this day it bears the same relation to human progress, that heathenism and

Judaism bore in the first and second and third and fourth centuries after Christ. I confess that, while I respect the clergy as much as any class of men, I hate the false ideas of the popular theology, and hate them with my body and with my spirit, with my mind and my conscience, with my heart and my soul; and I hate nothing so much as I hate the false ideas of the popular theology. They are the greatest curse of this nation.

Then I have preached against slavery; and to me slavery appears in two views.

First, it is a measure to be looked on as a part of the national housekeeping. We are to ask if it will pay; what its effect will be on the material earnings of the nation. And when we propose to extend slavery to a new territory, this is the question: Will you have slavery, and your land worth five dollars an acre, as in South Carolina; or will you have freedom, and your land worth thirty dollars an acre, as in Massachusetts? Will you have slavery, and the average earnings of all the people one dollar a week; or freedom, and the average earnings four dollars a week? Will you have slavery, and the worst cultivated lands, the rudest houses, and the poorest towns; or will you have freedom, and the nicest agriculture, the best manufactures, the richest houses, and the most sumptuous towns? Looking at it barely as a part of housekeeping, if I were a monarch, I should not like to say to California, Texas, and New Mexico: "You might have institutions that would make your land worth thirty dollars an acre, and enable your people to earn four dollars a week; but you shall have institutions that will make your land worth five dollars an acre, and the average earnings of the people one dollar a

week." I like money too well to take off three dollars from every four that might be earned, and twenty-five dollars from every acre of land worth thirty. I should think twice, if I were the President of the United States, before I did anything to bring about that result.

That is not all. Slavery is a principle, to be looked on as a part of our national religion: for our actions are our worship of God, if pious; of the devil, if impious. It is to be estimated by its conformity to natural law. From my point of view it is against all natural right, all natural religion, and is, as John Wesley said, "the sum of all villanies." When the question comes up, Shall we introduce slavery into a new territory? this is the question to be asked, Shall the laboring population be reduced to the legal rank of cattle; bought, bred, branded as cattle? Shall the husband have no right to his wife's society? Shall the maiden have no protection for her own virtue? Shall the wife be torn from her husband? Shall a mother be forced to cut the throats of four of her children, or else see them sold into slavery? — a case that has actually happened. If I were a monarch, I should not like to levy such a tax on any people under my dominion. If I were President of the United States, I should not like to say to California, New Mexico, or old Mexico, "I intend to reduce you to that position;" and I think if I did, and stood up before you afterwards, you would have something to say about it. I should not like to do this for the sake of being President of the United States.

Now, I must confess that I hate slavery; and I do not hate it any the less since it has become so popular in Boston, and, after a belief in the finality of the



compromise measures has been made the *sine qua non* of a man's social, political, and ecclesiastical respectability. I always hated it, and hate it all the worse to-day for what it has done.

Then I have preached against oppression in every form: the tyranny of man over woman; of popular opinion over the individual reason, conscience, and soul. I have preached against the tyranny of public law, when the law was wicked. Standing in a pulpit, preaching in the name of God, could I call on you to blaspheme the name of God for the sake of obeying a wicked statute which men had made? When I do that, may my right arm drop from my shoulder, and my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth! I have preached against the tyranny which takes advantage of men's misfortunes, and with the sponge of illegal usury sucks up the earnings of honest men; against the tyranny of the few over the many in Europe, and of the many over the few in America. I love freedom of thought and of action; and I claim for every man the right to think, not as I do, but as he must or may.

Then I have preached against intemperance, against making rum, selling rum, and drinking rum. The evil of intemperance has been under my eyes every Sunday. There is not a man before me, not a woman before me, not a girl or boy before me, but has lost some dear and valued relative, within not many years, slain by this monstrous vampire, which sucks and poisons the body of America. The poor men that I feed have been made paupers by rum; of the funerals that I attend, rum, with its harsh hammer, has often nailed down the coffin-lid; and of the marriages that I have helped to solemnize, how often has the wife



been left worse than a widow. Since intemperance has become so popular in Boston; since it has got the mayor and aldermen on its side, and while every thirty-fifth voter in Boston is a licensed seller of rum; when it is invested with such strength, and gets possession of the House of Representatives,— I have preached against it all the more. I know, from the little town where I was born, as well as this large one, what a curse and blight drunkenness is.

Then I have preached against war, and I suppose, before long, I shall have a new occasion to lift up my voice against it once more.

Now, with such ideas, and such a style of preaching, I could not be popular. Hated I must needs be. How could it be otherwise? Men who knew no God but a jealous God; no human nature but total depravity; no religion but the ordinances of baptism, the Lord's Supper, and reverence for ancient words of holy men, and the like; no truth but public opinion; no justice but public law; no earthly good above respectability,— they must needs hate me, and I do not wonder at it. I fear there is not a theological newspaper in the land that has not delivered its shot in my face. You know how the pulpits, at various times, have rung out with indignation against me, and what names you and I have been called.

Well, I have not yet fired a shot in my own defense. Not one. I have replied to no attack, to no calumny. I have had too much else to do. In comparison with the idea which I endeavor to set forth, I am nothing, and may go to the ground, so that the truth goes on.

When I first came to stand in this place, many of my Unitarian brethren of the city, and elsewhere, com-

plained publicly and privately, that they were held responsible for my theological opinions, which they did not share; and that they had no opportunity to place themselves right before the public. To give them an opportunity and occasion for developing the theological antithesis betwixt their doctrines and my own, and to let the public see in what things they all agreed, and in what they unitedly differed from me, I published "A Letter to the Boston Association of Congregational Ministers, touching certain Matters of their Theology." But, alas! they have not answered the letter, nor informed the public of the things in which they "all agree with each other," and wherein they all differ from me.

Men predicted our defeat. I believe six months was the longest space allotted to us to live and repent; that was the extent of our "mortal probation." We ought not to think harshly of men for this. I suppose they did the best they could with their light. But we went on, and continued to live. It is a little curious to notice the reasons assigned by the press and the pulpit, for the audience that came together. For the first six months I took pains to collect the opinions of the theological press and pulpit. I would say that, with this exception, I have seldom read the various denunciations which have been written against you and me, and which have been sent, I hope with the best intentions, from all parts of the United States. When I have received them, and seen their character from a line or two,—and the postage was seldom paid,<sup>2</sup>—I have immediately put them in the safest of all places,—committed them to the flames. But, for this period of six months, during which our ecclesiastical existence was likely to continue, I inquired what the opinions of the press and pulpit were.

The first reason assigned for the audience coming together was this: They came from vain curiosity, having itching ears to hear "what this babbler say-eth."

Then it was said men came here because I taught "utter irreligion, blank immorality;" that I had "no love of God, no fear of God, no love of man;" and that you thought if you could get rid of your conscience and soul, and trample immortality underfoot, and were satisfied there was no God, you should "have a very nice time of it here and hereafter." Men read history very poorly. It is not ministers who falsify the word of God that are ever popular with the great mass of men. Never, never! Not so. The strictest, hardest preacher draws crowds of men together, when he speaks in the name of religion and God's higher law; but eloquent Voltaire gets most of his admirers of scoffing among the cultivated, the refined, and the rich; atheism is never democratic.

Then it was declared that I was a shrewd, practical man, perfectly "well posted up" in everything which took place; knew how to make investments, and get very large returns: unluckily, it has not been for myself that this has been true. And it was said that I collected large-headed, practical men to hear me, and that you were a "boisterous assembly."

Then, that I was a learned man, and gave learned discourses on ecclesiastical history or political history, — things which have not been found very attractive in the churches hitherto.

Then again, that I was a philosopher, with a wise head, and taught men "theological metaphysics;" and so a large company of men seemed all at once smitten with a panic for metaphysics and abstract preaching. It was never so before.

Then it was reported that I was a witty man, and shot nicely feathered arrows very deftly into the mark; and that men came to attend the sharp-shooting of a wit.

Then there was a seventh thing,— that I was an eloquent man; and I remember certain diatribes against the folly of “filling churches with eloquence.”

Then again, it was charged against me that I was a philanthropist, and taught the love of men, but did “not teach at all the love of God;” and that men really loved to love one another, and so came.

Then it was thought that I was a sentimentalist, and tickled the ears of “weak women,” who came to delight themselves, and be filled full of “poetry and love.”

The real thing they did not seem to hit; that I preached an idea of God, of man, and of religion, which commended itself to the nature of mankind.

From the churches in general I expected little; but I have found much deep and real kindness from fellow-ministers of all denominations,—Unitarian, Universalist, Baptist, Methodist, Calvinist, and Christian. On the whole,—I am sorry to say it,—I have had less friendship shown me by the Unitarian sect in America, all things considered, than by the other sects. The heartiest abuse has come from my own brethren, and the stingiest testimonials for any merit. That was to be expected. I was a Unitarian: that is, I utterly rejected the Trinitarian theology; I associated chiefly with Unitarian clergymen. When my theological opinions became known to the wider public, some twelve years ago, they were declared “unsafe” and “dangerous” by the stricter sects. So an outcry was raised, not only against me, but also against the Uni-



tarian sect. In self-defense, many Unitarian ministers, who had long been accused of being "hag-ridden by the orthodox," turned round, and denounced both my opinions and me, sometimes in the bitterest and most cruel fashion. They said, "He must be put down." They sought to "silence" me, to exclude me from the journals and the pulpits of the sect, to dissuade lyceum committees from asking me to lecture, and to prevent my speaking in Boston. Nay, some took pains to prevent my parishioners at West Roxbury from attending service there; they tried to hinder booksellers from publishing my works; and twelve years ago I could not find a publisher to put his name to the title-page of the first edition of my "Discourse of the Transient and Permanent in Christianity;" the Swedenborgian printers generously volunteered their name. The commonest courtesies of life were carefully withheld. I was treated like a leprous Jew. Studious attempts at deliberate insult were frequently made by Unitarian clergymen. I soon found, that, if theological odium had been legally deprived of the arrows in its ancient quiver, it had yet lost none of the old venom from its heart. The Unitarians denied the great principle they had so manfully contended for,—free spiritual individuality in religion. I must say I think they made a mistake. As a measure, their conduct was inexpedient; as a principle, it was false and wrong; as priestcraft, it was impolitic; as ethics, it was wicked: they hurt their own hand in breaking the Golden Rule over my head. But there were some very honorable exceptions in the denomination; men who lost sectarian favor by adhering to a universal principle of morals; and let me say that I think no sect in Christendom would, in such a case, have treated a



“heretic” in their own bosom with so little harshness as the Unitarians have shown to me. They have at least the tradition of liberality, which no other sect possesses. In England they have met my opinions with philosophical fairness, if not with partiality, and treated me with more consideration and esteem than I ever ventured to claim for myself.<sup>3</sup>

All over the land I have found kindly and warm-hearted men and women, who have shed their dew-drop of sympathy upon me, just when my flower hung its head and collapsed, and seemed ready to perish. There is one clergyman to whom I owe an especial obligation. He has often stood in this place, and, for conscience’ sake, has made greater and more difficult sacrifices than I. He began as an evangelist to the poor in Boston; carrying them the body’s bread in his left hand, and Heaven’s own manna in his right; and he now sheds broader charity from the same noble and generous heart. “A friend in need is a friend indeed;” and, if his face were not before me at this moment, I should say what his modesty would be pained to bear; but it is what none of you need to be told.<sup>4</sup>

It is eight years since first we came together; and that is a long time in American history. America has gained four new States in that time; a territory bigger than the old thirteen; and got all this new country by wickedness. We have spread slavery anew over a country larger than the empire of France; have fought the Mexican War, so notorious for its iniquity. We have seen both political parties become the tools of slavery; the Democratic perhaps a little worse than the Whig. We have seen the Fugitive Slave Bill welcomed in Boston, a salute of one hundred guns fired

to honor its passage; and a man kidnapped out of the birth-place of Samuel Adams, to the delight of the controlling men thereof. You and I have repeatedly transgressed the laws of the land, in order to hinder "Unitarian Christians" of Boston, supported by their clergy, from sending our fellowshippers into the most hideous slavery in the world.

Great men have died,—Jackson, Adams, Taylor, Calhoun, Clay, Webster. What changes have taken place in Europe in this brief eight years! The old pope has died. The new pope promised to be a philanthropist, and turned out what we now see. All of royalty, all of the king, "was carried out from Paris in a single street cab;" and a few days later "Napoleon the Little" came in, furnished with nothing but "a tame eagle and a pocketful of debts." We have seen France rise up to the highest point of sublimity, and declare government to be founded on the unchanging law of God; and the same France, with scarcely the firing of a musket, drop down to the bottom of the ridiculous, and become the slave of the stupidest and vulgarest even of vulgar kings. We have seen all Western Europe convulsed with revolutions; the hope of political freedom brightening in men's hearts; and now see a heavier despotism as the present result of the defeated effort. Kossuth is an exile; and a ruined debauchee is the "imperial representative of morality" on the throne of Saint Louis.

I have been your minister almost eight years. Some of our members have withdrawn, and walk no more with us. I trust they were true to their conscience, and went where wiser and abler and better men can feed their souls as I cannot. I have never thought it a religious duty for any man to listen to my poor words; how poor nobody knows so well as I.

In myself there are many things which I lament. It has been a great grief to me, as I have looked upon your faces, that I was no worthier to speak to you: that I had not a larger intellectual power, by birth and culture, to honor the ideas withal; and, still more, that, in conscience and heart and soul, I was so poor.

One thing in my ministry has troubled me a good deal. Coming from a little country parish, with the habits of a country minister; knowing every man, woman, and child therein; knowing the thoughts of all that had any thoughts, and the doubts of such as had strength to raise a doubt,—I have found it painful to preach to men whom I did not know in the intimacy of private life. For the future, I hope it will be possible for me to know you better, and more intimately in your homes.

I must have committed many errors. When an old man I trust I shall see them, and some time point them out, that others may be warned by my follies. You must know my character better than I know it. My private actions I know best; but you see me in joy and sorrow, in indignation and penitence, in sermon and in prayer, when there is no concealment in a man's face. Hold a medal, worn smooth, before the fire, and the old stamp comes out as before. Concealment lifts her veil before any strong emotion which renews the face. You must know me better than I know myself. I also know you. I have tasted your kindness in public and private; not only from women,—who have always shown the readiest sympathy for a new religious development, from the time when Pharaoh's daughter drew a slave's child out of the Nile, to that day when a woman poured the box of ointment over the head of Jesus,—but also from men; not only

from young men, but from those whose heads have blossomed anew with the venerable flowers of age.

You, my friends, have been patient with my weaknesses, kind and affectionate. I think no man ever had truer, warmer, or more loving friends. As I have looked round on your faces, before the commencement of service; as I have sat and seen the young and the old, the rich and the poor, the joyous and the sad, come together; as I have gathered up the outward elements of my morning prayer from the various faces and dissimilar histories, which, at a single glance, stood before me,—my friends, I have thanked my God it was my lot to stand here; and yet have reproached myself again and again, that I was no worthier of the trust, and have asked before God, “Who is sufficient for these things?”

I know how often I must have wounded your feelings, in speaking of the political conduct of America; for I have endeavored to honor what was right, and expose to censure what was wrong, in both parties, and in the third party during its existence. I have not passed over the sins of trade. I have preached on all the exciting and agitating topics of the day. I wonder not that some friends were offended. I only wonder that such a multitude has still continued to listen. Verily, there is little to attract you in these surroundings: public opinion pronounced it infamous to be here. It was the ideas of absolute religion that drew you here through ill report. The highest and the best things I have had to offer have always found the warmest welcome in your heart.

We must bid farewell to these old walls. They have not been very comfortable. All the elements have been hostile. The winter's cold has chilled us; the



summer's heat has burned us; the air has often been poisoned with contaminations, a whole week long in collecting; and the element of earth, the dirt, that was everywhere. As I have stood here, I have often seen the spangles of opera-dancers, who beguiled the previous night, lying on the floor beside me; and have picked them up in imagination, and woven them into my sermon and psalm and prayer. The associations commonly connected with this hall have not been of the most agreeable character. Dancing monkeys and "Ethiopian serenaders" making vulgar merriment out of the ignorance and the wretchedness of the American slave, have occupied this spot during the week, and left their marks, their instruments, and their breath behind them on Sunday. Could we complain of such things? I have thought we were very well provided for, and have given God thanks for these old, but spacious walls. The early Christians worshiped in caverns of the ground. In the tombs of dead men did the only live religion find its dwelling-place at Rome. The star of Christianity "first stood still over a stable." These old walls will always be dear and sacred to me. Even the weather-stains thereon are to me more sacred than the pictures which the genius of Angelo painted in the Sistine Chapel, or those with which Raphael adorned the Vatican. To me they are associated with some of the holiest aspirations and devoutest hours of my mortal life, and with the faces which welcomed every noble word I ever learned to speak.

Well, we must bid them farewell. Yonder clock will no more remind me how long I have trespassed on your patience, when your faces tell no such tale. We will bid these old walls, these dusty lights, farewell.



Our old companion, the organ, has gone before us; and again shall we hear its voice.

But what have I been to you in all this time? You have lent me your ears; I have taken your hearts too, I believe. But let me ask this of you: have I done you good, or harm? Have I taught you, and helped you, to reverence God the more; to have a firmer and heartier faith in Him; to love Him the deeper, and keep His laws the better; to love man the more? If so, then indeed has my work been blessed, and I have been a minister to you. But if it has not been so; if your reverence and faith in God grow cold under my preaching, and your zeal for man dwindles and passes away,—then turn off from me, and leave me to the cold gilding and empty magnificence of our new place of worship; and go you and seek some other, who, with a loftier aspiring mind, shall point upwards towards God, and, with a holier heart, shall bid you love Him. But, above all things, let me entreat you that no reverence for me shall ever blind your eyes to any fault of mine, to any error of doctrine. If there are sins in my life, copy them not. Remember them at first, drop the tear of charity on them, and blot them out.

## IV

### THE POSITION AND DUTY OF A MINISTER

"I know whom I have believed."—2 TIMOTHY i. 12.

In the development of mankind, all the great desires get some instrument to help achieve their end—a machine for the private hand, an institution for the mind and conscience, the heart and soul, of millions of men. Thus all the great desires, great duties, great rights, become organized in human history; provided with some instrument to reach out and achieve their end. This is true of the finite desires; true also of the infinite.

Man would be fed and clothed: behold the tools of agriculture and the arts,—the plough and the factory. He would be housed and comforted: behold the hamlet and the town. Man and maid would love one another; see the home and the family,—the instrument of their love. Thousands want mutual succor; there is society, with its neighborly charities, and duties every day. Millions of men ask defense, guidance, unity of action; behold the State, with its constitutions and its laws, its officers, and all its array of political means. These are finite; a lengthening of the arm, a widening of the understanding; tools for the conscience and the heart. Thereby I lay hold of matter and lay hold of man, and get the uses of the material world and of my brother men.

These are finite, for to-day. But the same rule applies to the infinite desires. Man would orient him-

self before his God; and hence, alongside of the field and the factory, in the midst of the hamlet and the town, beside the state-house and the market-house, there rises up the Church, its finger pointing to the sky. This is to represent to man the infinite desire, infinite duty, infinite right. Thereby mankind would avail itself of the forces of God, and be at home in His world. Man is so much body, that the mouth goes always: he never forgets to build and plant. But the body is so full of soul, that no generation ever loses sight of God. In this ship of the body, cruising oft in many an unholy enterprise, standing off and standing on, tacking and veering with the shifting wind of circumstance and time, there is yet a little needle that points up, which has its dip and variations;

“But, though it trembles as it lowly lies,  
Points to the light that changes not in heaven.”

Man must have his institution for the divine side of him, and hence comes the Church. Man has a priest before he has a king; and the progress in his idea of priest marks the continual advance of the human race.

The minister is to serve the infinite duties of man, minister to his infinite rights; and is to betake himself to the work of religion, as the farmer to agriculture, the housewright to building. But his function will depend on his idea of religion, of what religion is; that on his idea of God, of what God is.

Now, in all the great historical forms of religion, both before and after Christ, priest and people have regarded God as imperfect in power, in wisdom, in justice, in love, or in holiness; as a finite God, and often with a dark background of evil to Him. There-

fore, while they have worshiped before the Father, they have trembled before the devil, and deemed the devil mightier than God. Hence religion has been thought the service of an imperfect God, and of course a service with only a part of the faculties of man; those faculties not in their perfect action, but in their partial development and play.

Thus the function of the minister has been a very different thing in different ages of mankind. Let me sum up all these in three great forms.

I. First, the priest was to appease the wrath of God. He was to stand between offended Deity and offending man, to propitiate God and appease Him, to make Him humane. The priest was a special mediator between God on the one side, and man on the other; and it was taught that God would not listen to Silas and Daniel; He would hear the word of Abner. So Abner must propitiate the Deity for Silas and Daniel.

The priest attempts this, first, by sacrifice, which the offending offers to the offended; and the sacrifice is an atonement, a peace-offering, a bribe to God to buy off His anger. Next, he attempts it by prayers, which, it is thought, alter the mind of God and His purpose; for the priest is supposed to be more humane than the God who made humanity. But God, it is thought, will not hear the prayer of the profane people, nor accept their sacrifice; only that of the sacred priest.

This, then, was the function of the heathen and Hebrew priest for a long time. Without sacrifice by the priest's hand, there was no salvation. That was the rule. "Come not empty-handed before the Lord,"

says the priest, "else He will turn you off." Then, the offering of a sacrifice was thought to be religion, and the priest's function was to offer it. That is the rudest form.

II. Next, the function of the priest is to reconcile the offended God to offending men by ritual action, and then to communicate salvation to men by outward means,—baptism, penitence, communion, absolution, extreme unction, and the like. Here the priest is no longer merely a sacrificer; he is a communicator of salvation already achieved; he does not make a new deposit of salvation, but only draws on the established fund. That is the chief function of the Catholic priest at this day. But still, like the Hebrew and heathen priests, he makes "intercession with God" for the living and the dead. "Out of the range of the sacraments of the Church," says he, "there is no salvation; the wrath of God will eat you up." The Catholic priest does not make a new and original sacrifice; for the one great sacrifice has been made once for all, and God has been appeased towards mankind in general. But the priest is to take that great sacrifice, and therewith redeem this and the other particular man; communicating to individuals the general salvation which Christ has wrought. With the Catholic, therefore, to take the sacraments is thought to be religion, and the great thing of religion.

III. Then, as a third thing, the priest aims to communicate and explain a miraculous revelation of the will of God; and the worshipers are to believe that miraculous revelation of the will of God, and have faith in it. That is the only means of salvation with them. So, in this third form, to take the Scriptures and believe them is thought to be religion. This is



the chief official function of the Protestant priest,—to communicate and explain the Scriptures; and all the theological seminaries in the Protestant world for the education of clergymen are established chiefly for that function,—to teach the young man to communicate and explain the Scriptures to mankind; for belief in them is thought to be religion. Chillingworth, two hundred years ago, said, “The Bible is the religion of Protestants;” and meant, to believe the Bible is the religion of Protestants. And that is what is meant by salvation by faith.

The line of historical continuity is never broken. The Catholic priest, like the Hebrew and the heathen, still claims to alter the mind of God by “intercession.” The Protestant priest, like the Catholic, yet pretends to communicate salvation by the “sacraments,” in the waters of baptism, or the bread and wine of communion; and to change the purposes of God, by prayer for rain in time of drought, for health in time of pestilence. However, the chief function of the Protestant priest is to communicate and explain the Scriptures; for he says, “Out of the range of belief in Scripture there is no salvation.”

The heathen and Hebrew priests say, “Offer the sacrifice, and be saved.” Says the Catholic priest, “Accept the sacrament, and be saved.” Says the Protestant priest, “Believe the Scriptures, and be saved.” That has been, or still is, the official function of these three classes of ministers in sacred things. They represent the three successive ideas of religion which have appeared in the heathen and Hebrew Church, in the Catholic Church, and lastly in the Protestant Church.

But at this day, in all the forms of religion which belong to the two leading races of mankind, the Cauca-

sian and the Mongolian,—comprising the Hebrew, Zoroastrian, Buddhist, Christian, and Mahometan,—the priest has got an exceptional function. That has come upon him by accident, as it were, in the progress of man,—a human accident, for there are no divine ones; God lets nothing slip unawares from His pen; there are no accidents in His world. And that function is to promote religion; to promote plain piety and plain morality—the love of God and the love of man.

This, I say, is exceptional. It is only a subsidiary part of the function, even of the Protestant minister. True, throughout all Christendom the priest demands righteousness. But mark this: he demands it as a measure convenient for present expediency, not as a principle necessary to eternal salvation. This exceptional function is more important with the Catholic than it was with the heathen or Hebrew; more important with the Protestant than it is with the Catholic. Still it is subsidiary; and it is thought that the sin of a whole life, however wicked, may be wiped out all at once, if, on his death-bed, a man repeats a few passages of Scripture, and declares his faith in the redemption of Christ, and a belief in the words of the Bible. A man so base as Aaron Burr—the most dreadful specimen of human depravity that America has yet produced, so far as I know—might have left an unblemished reputation for Christianity, if, a few weeks before he died, he had confessed his belief in every word between the lids of this Bible; had declared that he had no confidence in human virtue, hoped for salvation only through Christ; and if he had taken the communion at a priest's hands. That would have given him a better reputation in the churches than

the noble career of Washington, and the long, philanthropic, and almost unspotted life of Franklin.

I say this is subsidiary. The Protestant priest does not rely on it as his main work; and, in proof of success, I have seldom known a minister point to the morality of his parish,—not a drunkard in it, not a licentious man, not a dishonest man, in it. I have seldom known him refer even to the comfort of his parish,—pauperism gone, all active, doing well, and well to do. He tells you of the number that he has admitted to the “Christian communion,” of those that he has “sprinkled” with the waters of baptism; not the souls he has baptized with the Holy Ghost and its beauteous fire. Men wish to prove that the Americans are a “Christian people,” a “religious people:” they tell the number of Bibles there are in the land; the number of churches that point their finger with such beauty to the sky; they never tell of the good deeds of the nation; of its institutions, of its ideas, its sentiments. And when an outcry is made against the advance of “infidelity,” nobody quotes the three million slaves, the political corruption of the rulers, the venality of the courts, the disposition to plunder other nations; nobody speaks of intemperance and licentiousness, and dishonesty in trade; they only say that some man “denies total depravity, or the fall,” or “the miracles,” or “the existence of a devil,” and thinks he is “wiser than the Bible.” Anywhere in Christendom it would be deemed a heresy against all Christendom to say that human nature was sufficient for human history, and had turned out on trial just as God meant it should turn out on trial; and that a man’s salvation was his character, his heart, and his life.

If we start with the idea that God is infinitely perfect in power, in wisdom, in justice, and in love and holiness,— then the function of the minister is not to appease the wrath of God by sacrifice and intercession; not to communicate miraculous salvation; not even to communicate and explain a miraculous revelation; it will be to promote absolute religion amongst mankind.

He will start with three facts: first, with the infinite perfection of the dear God; next, with human nature, which God made as a perfect means to His perfect end,— human nature developed thus far in its history; and, as a third thing, with the material universe,— the ground under our feet and the heavens over our head; and he will take the universe, the world of matter and the world of man, as the revelation of the Infinite God.

Then, I say, the function of the minister will be to teach and promote the religion of human nature in all its parts. He will aim to teach, first, natural piety, the subjective service of God, the internal worship. I mean the love of God with mind and conscience and heart and soul; in the intellectual form, the love of every truth and every beauty; in the moral form, the love of justice; in the affectional form, the love of God as love; and the love of God also as holiness: to say it in a word, love of the God of infinite wisdom, justice, love, and holiness,— the perfect God, the infinite object, adequate to satisfy every spiritual desire of man.

Then he must aim to teach natural morality, the objective worship of God, which is the outward service. That is, the keeping of all the laws of the body and spirit of man; service by every limb of the body,



every faculty of the spirit, and every power which we possess over matter or over men.

The minister is to show what this piety and morality demand,—in the form, first, of individual life; then in the form of domestic life; then of social, political, ecclesiastical, and general human life. He is to show how this religion will look in the person of a man, in a family, community, church, nation, and world. That is his function.

He is not to humanize God, but to humanize men; not to appease the wrath of God,—there is no such thing; not to communicate a mysterious salvation from an imaginary devil in another world; but, in this life, to help men get a real salvation from want, from ignorance, folly, impiety, immorality, oppression, and every form of evil. He is to teach man to save himself by his character and his life; not to lean on another arm. His function is not to communicate and explain a miraculous revelation. He knows revelation only by constant modes of operation; revelation by law, not against law; revelation in this universe of matter and in this greater universe of man, not revelation by miracle. What is the exceptional function of the heathen, the Hebrew, the Catholic, and the Protestant priest, is the instantial and only function of the minister of the Infinite God, who would teach the absolute religion.

Well, this minister must have regard to man in his nature as body and as spirit. Natural religion,—why, it is for this life, as well as the life to come. It is but part of the function of religion to save me for the next world; I must be saved for this. He is to teach men to subordinate the body to the spirit, but to give the body its due; to subordinate the lower desires to



the higher; all finite desires, duties, and rights, to the infinite desire, duty, and right; but to do this so that no one faculty shall tyrannize over any other, but that a man shall be the harmony which God meant him to be. He is to see to it that every one is faithful to his own individual character, and takes no man for master; everybody for teacher who can serve and teach; nobody for master barely to command. And while he insists on individuality of life, he must also remember that the individual is for the family, that for the community, the community for the nation, and the nation for mankind; and that all of these must be harmoniously developed together. Thus the partiality of friendship, of connubial or parental love, the narrowness of the clan, neighborhood, or country, he is to correct by that universal philanthropy which takes in neighborhood, nation, and all mankind.

He is to remember, also, the immortal life of man, and to shed the light of eternity into man's consciousness, in the hour of passion, and in the more dangerous, long, cold, clear day of ambition. In the hour of distress and dreadful peril, he is to help men to that faith in God which gives stillness in every storm. He is to help them overcome this puerile fear of death, and to translate their fear of God into love for Him,—into perfect, blameless, absolute trust in the Father; and he is to bring the light of all this beneficence upon men in the season of peril, and in the dreadful hour of mortal bereavement, when father and mother and child and wife gather blackness in their countenance, and pass away. Over the gate of death he is to arch the rainbow of everlasting life, and bid men walk through unabashed, and not ashamed. He is to promote the sentiment of religion, as a feeling of depend-

ence on God, obligation to God, trust in God, and love for God; of ultimate dependence on His providence, inalienable obligation to keep His law, absolute trust in His protection, and a perfect and complete faith in His infinite perfection.

Then he is to promote the practice of this religion, so that what at first is an instinctive feeling shall be next a conscious idea of this ultimate dependence, inalienable obligation, absolute trust, and perfect and complete love; he is to promote the application of this consciousness of religion to all the departments of human life,—individual, domestic, social, national, and universal. Of all doctrines he is to ask, Are they true? of all statutes, Are they just? of all conduct, Is it manly, loving, and kind? of all things,—institutions, thoughts, and persons, Are they conformable to the nature of mankind, and so to the will of God? So his aim must be to make all men perfect men; to do this first to his own little congregation, and next to all mankind.

Now this cannot be done abstractly. Man is a body as well as a spirit. In a material world, by means of material things, must he work out his spiritual problems. The soul is a soul in the flesh, and the eternal duties of life bear hard on the transient interests of to-day.

Man's character is always the result of two forces,—the immortal spirit within him, and the transient circumstances about him. The minister is to know, that nine persons out of ten have their character much influenced by the circumstances about them; and he is to see to it that those circumstances are good. Thus, the abstract work of promoting religion, and helping to form the character of the people, brings the minister into contact with the material forces of the world.

It is idle to say the minister must not meddle with practical things. If the sun is to shine in heaven, it must look into the street, and the shop, and the cellar; it must burnish with lovely light a filing of gold in the jeweller's shop, and it must illuminate the straggling straw in a farmer's yard. And just so religion, which communes with God with one hand, must lay the other on every human duty. So you see the relation which the minister must sustain to the great works of man, to political and commercial activity, to literature, and to society in general.

The State is a machine to work for the advantage of a special nation, for its material welfare alone, by means of certain restricted sentiments and ideas limited to that work, written in a Constitution, which is the norm of the statutes; by means of statute laws, which are the norm of domestic and social conduct. So the Legislature makes statutes for the material welfare of the majority of that nation; the Judiciary decides that the statutes conform to the Constitution; the Executive enforces the statutes, and the people obey. When the State has done this, it has done everything which its idea demands of it at the present day.

Now, the minister is to represent, not America, not England, not France alone, but the human nature of all mankind; and see that his nation harms no other nation; that the majority hinders no minority, however small; that it brings the weight of its foot upon no single man, never so little. He must see that the material comfort of to-day is not got at the cost of man's spiritual welfare for to-day, to-morrow, and eternity. So he is to try every statute of men by the law of God; the Constitution of America by the Constitution of the Universe. National measures he must try by universal

principles; and if a measure does not square with the abstract true and the abstract right, does not conform to the will and the law of God,— then he must cry out, “Away with it!” Statesmen look at political economy; and they ask of each measure, “Will it pay, here and now?” The minister must look for political morality, and ask, “Is it right in the eyes of God?” So you see that at once the pulpit becomes a very near neighbor to the state-house; and the minister must have an eye to correct and guide the politicians. He must warn men to keep laws that are just, warn them to break laws that are wicked; and, as they reverence the dear God, never to bow before an idol of statesmen or the State.

Then he must have an eye to the business of the nation; and while the trader asks only, “What merchandise can we make?” the minister must also ask, “What men shall we become?” Both the politicians and the merchants are wont to use men as mere tools, for the purposes of politics and trade, heedless of what comes, by such conduct, to their human instruments. The minister is to see to it, that man is never subordinated to money, morality never put beneath expediency, nor eternity sacrificed to to-day. The slave-trade was once exceedingly profitable to Newport and Liverpool, and was most eminently “respectable.” But the minister is to ask for its effects on men; the men that traffic, and the trafficked men. Once it was as disreputable in a certain church in this city to preach against slave-buying in Guinea and slave-selling in Cuba, as it is now to preach against slave-taking in Boston or New Orleans. The spirit of modern commerce is sometimes as hostile to the higher welfare of the people as the spirit of ancient war; both Old



and New England have abundantly proved this in the present century.

The minister is to look also at the character of literature; to warn men of the bad, and guide them to the good. At this day the power of the press is exceedingly great for good or for evil. In America, thank God, it is a free press; and no wicked censor lays his hand on any writer's page. See what a great expansion the press has got! What was a private thought one night in a senator's heart, is the next day a printed page, spread before the eyes of a million men. The press is an irresponsible power, and needs all the more to be looked after; and who is there to look after it, if not the minister who reverences the great God?

Then the minister is to study nicely the general conduct of society, and seek to guide men from mere desire to the solemn counsels of duty; to check the redundancy of appetite in the period of passion, and the redundancy of ambition in the more dangerous period of calculation; to guard men against sudden gusts of popular frenzy.

The great concerns of education come also beneath the minister's eye; and while the press, business, and politics keep the lower understanding intensely active and excessively developed, he is to guide men to the culture of reason, imagination, conscience, the affections, and the soul; is to show them a truth far above the forum and the market's din; is to lead them to justice and to love, and to enchant their eyes with the beauty of the Infinite God. The minister of absolute religion must be the schoolmaster of the loftier intellect and the conscience; the teacher of a philanthropy that knows no distinction of color or of race;



the teacher of a faith in God which never shrinks from obedience to His law.

In society, as yet, there is still a large mass of "heathenism,"—I mean of scorn for that which is spiritual in the body, and immortal in the soul; a contempt for the feeble, hatred against the unpopular transgressor, a contempt for justice, a truckling to expediency, and a cringing to men of large understanding and colossal wickedness. Hence, in the nation there is a perishing class three and thirty hundred thousand strong, held as slaves. In all our great cities there is another perishing class, goaded by poverty, oppressed by crime. The minister is to be an especial guardian and benefactor of the neglected, the oppressed, the poor; eyes to the ignorant, and conscience and self-respect to the criminal. He is not to represent merely the gallows and the jail; he is to represent the spirit of the man who "came to save that which was lost," and the infinite goodness of God, who sends this sunlight on you and me, as well as on better men.

Then, in all our great cities, there is one deep, and dark, and ghastly pit of corruption, whereinto, from all New England's hills, there flows down what was once as fair and as pure and as virgin-fresh as the breath of maiden morn. It is the standing monument which shows the actual position of woman in modern society; that men regard her as the vehicle of their comfort and the instrument of their lust,—not a person, only a thing. The minister, remembering who it was that drew Moses out of the river Nile, and who washed the feet of one greater than Moses with her own tears, and wiped them with her hair, must not forget this crime, its consequences, which contaminate

society, and its cause afar off,—contempt and scorn for woman; that is its cause.

In all this you see how different is the position and function of the minister of absolute religion from that of the mere priest. In Russia the few hold down the many, and the priest says nothing against it. He is there only to appease God, to administer salvation, to communicate Scripture; not to teach morality and piety. In America the many hold down the few,—the twenty millions chain the three; and the priest says nothing against it. What does he care? He goes on appeasing the wrath of God, administering salvation, explaining and communicating Scripture, and turns round and says: “This is all just as it should be, a part of the revelation, salvation, and sacraments too; come unto me, and believe, and be baptized with water.” But the minister of absolute religion is to hold a different speech. He is to say: “My brethren, hold there! Stop your appeasing of God!—wait till God is angry. Stop your imputing of righteousness! There is no salvation in that. Stop your outcry of ‘believe, believe, believe!’ Turn round and put an end to this hateful oppression, and tread it under your feet; and then come before your God with clean hands, and offer your gift. That is your sacrifice.”

Warlike David plunders Uriah of the one lamb that lay all night in his bosom; then slays the injured man with the sword of the children of Ammon. The priest knows it all, and says against it not a single word; but he slays his bullocks, and offers his goats and his turtle-doves, and makes his sacrifices, and spreads out his hands and says, “Save us, good Lord! David is

a man after the Lord's own heart." No word touches the conscience of the king under his royal robe. But there comes forth a plain man, not a priest, nay, a prophet; he points the finger, with his "Thou art the man!" and the penitent king lies prostrate and weeping in the dust.

A man of great intellect leads off the people; city by city they go over. All the priests of commerce cry out, "Let us do as we list." "There is no higher law!" "I will send back my own brother." Then it is for the minister to speak,—words tender if he can, but at all events, words that are true, words that are just.

Just now the American Esau is hungry again. The Cuban pottage is savory. "Feed me," cries he, "for I am faint." "Eat, O Esau!" says the tempter, "rough and hairy, and tired with hunting gold in California, and negroes in New England. Eat of this, O American Esau! and be glad. There is no God!" But the minister is to say: "American Esau, wilt thou sell thy birthright of inalienable justice? Thou sell that! Dost not thou remember the Eye which never slumbers nor sleeps?"

This, my friends, is the function of the minister. Well, has he means adequate to his work? They are only his gifts by nature, and his subsequent attainments; his power of wisdom and justice, his power of love, and his power of religion; that is all; nothing more than that, with his power of speech to bring it to the heart of men. But he has for ally the human nature which is in all men, which loves the true and the just, loves man and loves God. He has all the forces of the universe to help him just so far as he is on the

side of truth and right; for all history is only a large showing, that "the way of the transgressor is hard;" and "the path of the righteous shineth more and more unto the perfect day." There are the august faces of noble men, who made the world loftier by their holiness, their philanthropy, and their faith in God. There are the prophets and apostles,—that Moses whom a woman drew out from the waters; this greater than Moses, whose feet a penitent sinner washed with her tears. There are the blessed words in this book, fragrant all over with beauty and with trust in God. There are the words in every wise book. And, if the minister is strong enough, the ground under his feet is his ally; and the heavens over his head,—they also are his help; they both shall mingle in his sermon as these various flowers at my side mingle their beauty in this cup.

There are living men and women about him all ready to help. Some of them will teach him new piety and new morality. There are great teachers thereof abroad in the world at this day; there are others equally far-sighted in the stillness of many a home. Helpers for a religious work — they are everywhere. Soon as the trumpet gives a not uncertain sound, they set themselves in order, and are ready for the battle. The noblest men of the times come round to the side of truth and right; and, when the hands of Moses hang heavy, men and women hold them up, till the sun goes down, and the sky flames with victory.

The minister has a most excellent position. It is so partly by old custom. Rest on Sunday, and the institution of preaching, are two habits exceedingly needful at this day, and of great advantage, if wisely used. But his position is great also by its nature; for



the minister is to preach on themes most concerning to all,—on the conduct of life, its final destination; is to appeal to what is deepest, dearest, truest, and what is divinest too, in mortal or immortal man.

The most cultivated class care little for piety; but, with the mass of men, religion has always been a matter the most concerning of all their concerns. So no earnest man ever spoke in vain. John the Baptist, Jesus of Nazareth, peasant Luther, hardy Latimer, courtly Fénélon, and accomplished Bossuet, when they speak, draw crowds from earth, and the humblest sinner looks up and aspires towards God. Men in our day forget the power of the pulpit, they see so few examples thereof. They know that bodily force is power; that money, office, a place in the senate, is power; they forget that the pulpit is power; that truth, justice, and love are power; that knowledge of God and faith in Him are the most powerful of all powers.

The churches decline. All over New England they decline. They cannot draw the rich, nor drive the poor, as once they did of old. Why is it so? They have an idea which is behind the age; a theology that did very well for the seventeenth century, but is feeble in the nineteenth. Their science is not good science; you must take it on faith, not knowledge; it does not represent a fact. Their history is not good history; it does not represent man, but old dreams of miracles. They have an idea of God which is not adequate to the purposes of science or philanthropy, and yet more valueless for the purposes of piety. Hence men of science turn off with contempt from the God of the popular theology; the philanthropists can only loathe a Deity who dooms mankind to torture. And will you ask deeply pious men to love the popular idea of God?



Here are in Boston a hundred ministers; you would hardly know it except by the calendar. Many of them are good, kind, well-conducted, well-mannered men, with rather less than the average of selfishness, and rather more than the average of charity. But how little do they bring to pass! Drunkenness reels through all the streets, and shakes their pulpit; the Bible rocks; but they have nothing to say, though it rock over. The kidnapper seizes his prey, and they have excuses for the stealer of men, but cannot put up a prayer for his victim; nay, would drive the fugitive from their own door. What is the reason? Blame them not. They are "ordained to appease the wrath of God," to "administer salvation" in wine or water, to "communicate and explain a miraculous revelation." They do not think that religion is piety and morality; it is belief in the Scriptures; compliance with the ritual. This is the cause which paralyzes the churches of New England and all the North. The clergy are better than their creed. But who can work well with a poor tool?

Well, my friends, it is to this pulpit that I have come. This is my function, such are my means. There was never such a time for preaching as this nineteenth century,—so full of vigor, enterprise, activity; so full of hardy-headed men. There was never such a time to speak in, such a people to speak to. In no country could I have so fair "a chance to be heard" as you have given me.

There is nothing between me and my God; only my folly, my prejudice, my pride, my passion, and my sin. I may get all of truth, of justice, of love, of faith in God, which the dear Father has treasured

up for eternity, age after age. "Fear not, my son," says the Father: "thou shalt have whatsoever thou canst take." And there is nothing betwixt me and the 23,000,000 of America, or the 260,000,000 of Christendom; nothing but my cowardice, my folly, my selfishness, and my sin; my poverty of spirit, and my poverty of speech. I am free to speak, you are free to hear; to gather the good into vessels, and cast the bad away. If old churches do not suit us, there is all the continent to build new ones on, all the firmament to build into. A good word flies swift and far. There is attraction for it in human hearts. Truth, justice, religion, and humanity,—how we all love them! Every day gives witness how dear they are to the hungry heart of man. Able men make a wicked statute, wicked judges violate the Constitution, and defile the great charter of human liberty with ungodly hoofs; but very seldom can they get the statute executed. "Keep it," says the priest; "there is no higher law!" The preaching comes to nothing; but a modest woman writes a little book — a great book; pardon me for calling it a little book — showing the wickedness of the law which men aim to enforce, and in thrice three months there are 400,000 copies of it in the bosom of the American and the British England; and it has become a flame in the heart of Christendom, which will not pass away.

Tell me of the "foolishness of preaching!" I have no confidence in "foolish preaching;" but I have an unbounded confidence in wise preaching,—in preaching truth, justice, holiness, and love; in preaching natural piety and natural morality. Only let the minister have a true idea of God such as men need, and of religion such as we want, and there was never such

a time for preaching, for religious power. Let me pray the people's prayer of righteousness, of faith in man, in God; and I have no fear that the devil shall execute his "lower law."

There was never such a nation to preach to. Look at the vigor of America; only in the third century yet, and there are three and twenty millions of us in the family, and such a homestead as never lay out of doors before. Look at her riches,—her corn, cattle, houses, shops, factories, ships, towns; her freedom here at the North,—at the South it is not America; it is Turkey in Asia moved over. Look at the schools, colleges, libraries, lyceums. The world never saw such a population; so rich, vigorous, well-educated, so fearless, so free, and yet so young. I know America very well. I know her faults; I have never spared them, nor never will. I have great faith in America; in the American idea; in the ideal of our government,—a government of all the people, by all the people, for all the people; a government to serve the inalienable rights of man; government according to the law of God, and His constitution of the universe. To the power of numbers, of money, of industry, and invention, I will ask the nation to add the power of justice, of love, of faith in God and in the natural law of God. Then we might surpass the other nations, not only in vulgar numbers and vulgar gold, but in righteousness, which the good God asks of us.

I have confidence in America. I do not believe that American democracy is always to be satanic, and never celestial. I do not believe in the democracy that swears and swaggers, that invades Mexico and Cuba, and mocks at every "higher law" which is above the passions of the mob. I know America better.

The democracy of the New Testament, of the Lord's Prayer, "Forgive as we forgive;" the democracy of the Beatitudes,—that shall one day be a "kingdom come." I have confidence in America, because I have confidence in man and confidence in God; for He knew what He did when He made the world, and made human nature sufficient for human history and its own salvation.

I say I have great faith in preaching; faith that a religious sentiment, a religious idea will revolutionize the world to beauty, holiness, peace, and love. Pardon me, my friends, if I say I have faith in my own preaching; faith that even I shall not speak in vain. You have taught me that. You have taught me to have a good deal of faith in my own preaching; for it is your love of the idea which I have set before you, that has brought you together week after week, and now it has come to be year after year, in the midst of evil report—it was never good report. It was not your love for me; I am glad it was not. It was your love for my idea of man, of God, and of religion. I have faith in preaching, and you have given me reason to have that faith.

I well know the difficulty in the way of the religious development of America, of New England, of Boston. Look round, and see what blocks the wheels forward; how strong unrighteousness appears; how old it is, how ancient and honorable. But I am too old to be scared. I have seen too much ever to despair. The history of the world,—why, it is the story of the perpetual triumph of truth over error, of justice over wrong, of love against hate, of faith in God victorious over everything which resists His law. Is there no lesson in the life of that dear and crucified one?



Eighteen hundred years ago his voice began to cry to us; and now it has got the ear of the world. Each Christian sect has some truth the others have not; all have earnest and holy-hearted men, sectarian in their creed, but catholic in character, waiting for the consolation, and seeking to be men.

I may have an easy life,— I should like it very well; a good reputation,— it would be quite delightful; I love the praise of men,— perhaps no man better. But I may have a hard life, a bad name in society, in the State, and a hateful name in all the churches of Christendom. My brothers and sisters, that is a very small thing to me, compared with the glorious gladness of telling men the whole truth, and the whole justice, and the whole love of religion. Before me pass the whirlwind of society, the earthquake of the State, and the fire of the Church; but through the storm, and the earthquake's crash, and the hiss of the fire, there comes the still small voice of reason, of conscience, of love, and of piety; and that is the voice of God. Those things shall perish, but this shall endure when the heavens have faded, as these poor flowers shall vanish away.

I am astonished, my friends, that men come to hear me speak; not at all amazed at the evil name which attends me everywhere. I am much more astonished that you came, and still come, and will not believe such evil things. In the dark hall we left but a week ago, which has now become a brilliant spot in my memory, all the elements were against us; here they are in our favor. Here is clear air in our mouths; here is beauty about us on every side. The sacrament is administered to our eyes; O God, that I could administer such



a sacrament of beauty also to your ear, and through it to your heart!

Bear with me and pardon me when I say that I fear that, of the many persons whom curiosity has brought hither to-day to behold the beauty of these walls, I cannot expect to gather more than a handful in my arms. Standing in this large expanse, with this crowd on every side, around and above me, and behind, I feel my weakness more than I have felt it ever before. If my word can reach a few earnest and holy hearts, and appear in their lives, then I thank my God that the word has come to me, and will try not to be faithless, but true.

I know my imperfections, my follies, my faults, my sins; how slenderly I am furnished for the functions I assume. You do not ask that I should preach to you of that; rather that I should preach thereof to myself, when there is no presence but the unslumbering Eye, which searches the heart of man.

If you lend me your ears, I shall doubtless take your hearts too. That I may not lead you into any wrong, let me warn you of this. Never violate the sacredness of your individual self-respect. Be true to your own mind and conscience, your heart and your soul. So only can you be true to God.

You and I may perish. Temptation, which has been too strong for thousands of stronger men, may be too great for me; I may prove false to my own idea of religion and of duty; the gold of commerce may buy me, as it has bought richer men; the love of the praise of men may seduce me; or the fear of men may deter my coward voice, and I may be swept off in the earthquake, in the storm, or in the fire, and prove

false to that still small voice. If it shall ever be so, still the great ideas which I have set forth, of man, of God, of religion,—they will endure, and one day will be “a flame in the heart of all mankind.” To-day! why, my friends, eternity is all around to-day, and we can step but towards that. A truth of the mind, of the conscience, of the heart, or the soul,—it is the will of God; and the omnipotence of God is pledged for the achievement of that will. Eternity is the lifetime of truth. As the forces of matter, from necessity, obey the laws of gravitation; so the forces of man must, consciously and by our volition, obey the infinite will of God. Out of this absolute religion, which I so dimly see,—and it is only the dimness of the beginning of twilight which I behold, and whence I dimly preach,—there shall rise up one day men with the intellect of an Aristotle and the heart of a Jesus, and with the beauty of life which belongs to human nature; there shall rise up full-grown and manly men, womanly women, attaining the loveliness of their estate; there shall be families, communities, and nations; ay, and a great world also, wherein the will of God is the law, and the children of God have come of age and taken possession. God’s thought must be a human thing, and the religion of human nature get incarnated in men, families, communities, nations, and the world.

Can you and I do anything for that? Each of us can take this great idea, and change it into daily life. That is the religion which God asks, the sacrament in which He communes, the sacrifice which He accepts.

## PRAYERS



## I

### PRAYERS

O thou Infinite Spirit, who needest no words for man to hold his converse with thee, we would enter into thy presence, we would reverence thy power, we would worship thy wisdom, we would adore thy justice, we would be gladdened by thy love, and blessed by our communion with thee. We know that thou needest no sacrifice at our hands, nor any offering at our lips; yet we live in thy world, we taste thy bounty, we breathe thine air, and thy power sustains us, thy justice guides, thy goodness preserves, and thy love blesses us for ever and ever. O Lord, we cannot fail to praise thee, though we cannot praise thee as we would. We bow our faces down before thee with humble hearts, and in thy presence would warm our spirits for a while, that the better we may be prepared for the duties of life, to endure its trials, to bear its crosses, and to triumph in its lasting joys.

We thank thee for the world that is about us, now serene, enlightened by the radiance of day, now covered over with clouds and visited by storms, and in serenity and in storm still guarded and watched and blessed by thee. We adore thee who givest us all these things that we are, and promisest the glories that we are to become. For our daily life we thank thee, for its duties to exercise our hands, for its trials and temptations to make strong our hearts, for the friends that are dear to us,—a joy to us in our waking hours, and in the visions of the night still present, and a blessing still.



We thank thee, O Lord, for thy tender providence which is over us all, for thy loving-kindness which blesses the child and the old man, which regards the sinner with affection, and lovest still thine holy child. Father, we know that we are wanderers from thy way, that we forget thy laws, that oftentimes the world has dominion over us, that we are slaves to passion and to every sense. And yet we rejoice to remember that thy kindness is not as our kindness, and thy love is infinite, that thou tenderly carest for thy children, that thou art the Shepherd of the sheep, and in thy bosom bearest the feeble lambs, and gently leadeest at last each wanderer back to its home.

We pray thee that we may forgive ourselves for every sin we commit, that with penitence we may wash out the remembrance of wrong, and with wings of new resolution fly out of darkness in the midst of transgression, into the higher, brighter heaven of human duty, of human joy, and of the Christian's peace.

Teach us, O Lord, to use this world wisely and faithfully and well. In its daily duties and trials may we find the school for wisdom, for goodness, and for piety. May we learn by every trial that thou sendest, be strengthened by every cross, and when we stoop in sadness to drink bitter waters, may we rise refreshed and invigorated. Help us to live at peace with our souls, disturbing no string on this harp of a thousand chords, but attuning all to harmony, and in our life living one great triumphant hymn to thee. Withhold from us what is evil, though we beg mightily for it, and with tears and prayers. Help us to live in unity with our brother men, reconciling our interest to their interests, by faithfully discharging every duty, by patiently bearing with the weakness or the strength of

our brothers, and loving them as we love ourselves. Teach us, Father, to love the unlovely, to love those who evil entreat us, to toil for those who are burdens in the world, and to seek to save them from ignorance, to reform them of their wickedness, and to hasten that time when all men shall recognize that thou art their Father, and their brothers are indeed their brothers, and that all owe fidelity to thee and loving-kindness to their fellow-men. Help us to live in unity with thee, no sloth hiding us from thy presence, no passion turning us aside from thy counsel, but, with mind and conscience, with heart and soul, assimilating ourselves to thee, till thy truth dwells in our understanding, and thy justice enlightens our conscience, and thy love shines a beatitude and a blessed light in our heart and soul for ever and ever.

In times of darkness, when men fail before thee, in days when men of high degree are a lie, and those of low degree are a vanity, teach us, O Lord, to be true before thee, not a vanity, but soberness and manliness; and may we keep still our faith shining in the midst of darkness, the beacon-light to guide us over stormy seas to a home and haven at last. Father, give us strength for our daily duty, patience for our constant or unaccustomed cross, and in every time of trial give us the hope that sustains, the faith that wins the victory and obtains satisfaction and fulness of joy.

Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. May thy kingdom come, and thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven. Give us each day our daily bread. Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from its evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory for ever. Amen.

## II

O thou Eternal One, whose presence fills all space and occupies all time, who hast thy dwelling-place in every humble heart that trustfully looks up to thee, we flee to thee again to offer thee our morning psalm of thanksgiving and of praise, and to ask new inspiration from thee for days to come, while we stain our sacrifice with penitence for evils that our hands have wrought. Father, may thy spirit pray with us in our prayer, teaching us the things that we ought to ask of thee; may we serve thee faithfully and worship thee aright. O Lord, we bow down our spirits before thee, we reverence thine infinite power, we adore thine unbounded wisdom, which understands things past, things present, and to come; we confide in thy perfect justice, knowing that we are safe; but, O Lord, we rejoice in thy love. We bless thee for thy tender mercies, our hearts thank thee for thy loving-kindness, and we reach out the arms of our soul towards thee, knowing that thou art our Father, who lovest us better even than the mothers that have borne us. O Lord, we do not know how to praise thee as we ought, for we do not understand all of thy goodness, we cannot measure all of thy loving-kindness towards us, for it is infinite.

We thank thee for the signs and tokens of thyself which thou hast placed around us everywhere. We thank thee for this lovely day which thou lendest us. We bless thee for the broad green world beneath our feet, for these wondrous heavens above our heads, which nightly thou sowest with starry seed, and every morning limnest with orient light. We thank thee that all these things are a revelation of thee, for day

giveth voice unto day, and night speaketh unto night, and the rivers as they roll, and the ocean as it ebbs and floods, and this all-embracing sky,— O Lord, they tell of thy magnitude, they speak of thy power, they talk of thy wisdom, and they charm us with tidings of thy love.

But a greater revelation than this of thyself hast thou made in thy still small voice, which whispers in our soul that all this magnificence is but a drop of thee, yea, a little sparklet that has fallen from thy presence, thou Central Fire, and Radiant Light of all. We know that these outward things are but a sparkle of thy power, a whisper of thy wisdom, a faint breath of thy loving-kindness. O Lord, we thank thee that on our soul thou hast writ that thou art our Father, that thy name is love, that we should not tremble nor fear before thee, but as a child to its mother, so may we turn longingly and lovingly and with unfailing trust to thee. Pardon us that we have known thee no better, that we have trembled when we should have rejoiced, and have been afraid when there was none to molest us nor to make us afraid. O Lord, open our inner eye that we may see thee as thou art, touch thou our soul with thine own inspiration that we may know thee, that we may love thee, that we may serve thee with our daily life.

We remember in our prayer the temptations which every day brings with it, our sorrows, and our trials, and our cares. Arm us for the duty which thou givest us to do, make us strong to bear every cross, patient and earnest to do every day's work in its own day, and to bear ourselves so bravely that we shall always acquit us as men, and so be strong. In our day of passion, we pray thee to deliver us out of its flame and



heat, that we come as thy children of old out of the furnace, with no smell of its pollution on our garment's hem. And in the more dangerous period of interest and ambition, we pray thee to save us from its chilling cold and its wintry frost, that we come out not benumbed by its palsy, nor frozen by its snow. Give us wisdom to disperse our darkness, let justice triumph over selfishness in our soul, let duty be supreme over desire, till every desire becomes dutiful and our daily life is one continual sacrament to thee. Father, let a living love of thee dwell in our hearts, let it become strong within us, and lead to a faith that fails not and needs not to be ashamed. May our earthly life be beautiful and acceptable in thy sight, and may our souls be filled with every spiritual gift from thee; and receiving much, may we give the more, making our lives still more acceptable to thee. Lead us through evil and through good report, bearing the cross which thou layest upon us; and by our prayers, our toil and our tears, change thou us into the glorious image of thyself, that we may be wholly thine, transformed to thee, and thy truth dwell with us, thy justice pitch her tent with us, and thine own loving-kindness charm and enchant our very souls. So may thy kingdom come, and so thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven.

### III

Our Father who art in heaven, thou soul of our souls, and safeguard of the world, we flee to thee to sing our morning psalm, to pray our morning prayer, bringing the offering of gratitude from our hearts, and asking of thee the gift of thy holy spirit. Thou sendest down thy sunlight on the world, thou rainest



thy rain to still the dust and pacify the stones of the street crying for moisture from the skies, and we know that thou wilt feed our spirits with thine inspiration, ministering truth to the hungry mind, justice to the conscience that asketh right of thee, and wilt pour thy holy love on every earnest, seeking, asking soul.

We thank thee for thy broad providence which cares for the grass in the fields, and adorns every little flower that fringes the hedgerows of life, and carest also for the mighty orbs above our heads and the solid ground beneath our feet; and thyself art not hard to find, nor far to seek, but art with every living soul of man. Father, we thank thee for thy justice which presides over this world, and out of evil bringeth forth good continually, disappointing the wickedness of men, and doing all things for our good. We thank thee for thine unbounded love which caused us to be, which made this fair world, which waiteth for us in our transgressions, and goes out to meet us, prodigals or penitent, a great way off, and blesses still thy wandering, even unrepentant child. We thank thee for thy voice in our hearts, for the inspiration which thou givest to the sons of men, to show us the way in which we should go, to rebuke us for every folly, to chastise us for every sin, but to encourage everything that is holy and noble and true in our hearts.

We thank thee for the noble examples of human excellence which thou raisest up from time to time, the landmarks of human life, and our guiding lights to lead us safely home to port and peace, to heaven here and heaven at last with thee.

We pray thee that we may be faithful and true to every gift which thou hast given us. In a time of darkness, when great men are a deceit and little men

are a lie, may our heart never fail us, nor we hesitate nor despair for a moment of thy goodness and thy truth. Though hand join in hand, teach us that wickedness cannot prosper, nor iniquity endure. Fix our eyes on the true, the right, the holy, the beautiful, and the good, till we love them, and therein love thee with an affection that cannot be ashamed and will not be defeated. Teach us to be blameless in our daily life, to be heroic in our conduct, distinguishing between the doctrines of men and thine everlasting commandments. Help us to love thee, the Creator, more than the creature before our eyes; to imitate thy justice, to share thy truth, and to spread abroad thy living love to all mankind. Are we weak,—and we know we are,—give us strength; sinners,—and our heart cries out against us,—chastise and rebuke us till we repent of our sin, and come back with humble hearts to worship thee in holiness, in nobleness, and in truth. Give us the love of thyself which shall tread down every passion under its feet that wars against the soul, that shall make our daily lives beneficent, and so cast out every fear, the fear of man, and the fear, O Lord, of thee. Help us to know thee in thine immensity, to feel thee and to love thee in thine infinite love, till every weight is cast off from us, and with thy sunshine on our wings we mount up as eagles and fly towards thee. We pray that we may be armed against temptation, and fortified inly for every duty, prepared for every emergency, and ready to serve thee with our limbs and our lives.

We ask thy blessing on all sorts and conditions of men in the various departments of our mortal lives. May the young be trained up in innocence, and taught, not to fear men, but to love their brothers and to

love thee. When sundered but joyful souls are by their affection wedded and made one, may a higher life spring up in their united hearts, and may they serve thee with blameless beauty and celestial piety set in a mortal life. In the various trials of our daily business teach us to be honest, and to love men, to respect the integrity of our own souls, and never waver, turned this side by fear of men, and that side by the lust for their praise and their admiration.

We remember the poor and the needy in our prayers; yea, Lord, the poorest and the neediest of all, who own not by human laws their bodies, nor their limbs, nor lives, who flee from the iron house of bondage and ask shelter here with us. Yea, Lord, their prayer from our lips goes up before thee, asking the rights of man which thou didst give them at their birth, but the oppressor so fraudfully and forcibly rent away. O Lord, we are all sinners before thee, but we remember those who with unashamed countenance tread down thy law, who even here seek for the life and freedom of men, and defile the fair heritage which our fathers asked of thee in their prayer and purchased with their sacred blood. Father, we pray thee that thou wilt pity those who have shown no pity, and wilt love those who to their brothers show only hate, treading them with bloody hoofs into the ground, and who with the brow of brass affront thy thunders and blaspheme thy love. Teach us, O Lord, our hardest task, to love also these. And our poor brothers, who with chained hands lift up an unchained soul to thee, who flee from city to city, while their persecutors desecrate thy name, who wander from one nation to another kingdom, seeking for the rights of man,—we pray thee that thou wilt guide them in their flight

by night, and still by day, and raise up defenders for them here and everywhere. Stir up the souls of noble men that they bewray not him that wandereth, that they hide and shelter the outcast, and are a wall of fire about those who have taken their life in their hands and fled to us for succor, till a band of brothers fold their arms about the needy, and uplift those that are faint and ready to perish in their fall.<sup>1</sup>

O Lord, thy charity never faileth. Touch the hearts of men with humanity, that they may learn justice and to love their brothers. Make us nobler, and braver, and holier. Teach us to love all men. So let us be thy children, loving those that hate us, and praying for such as despitefully use us. So may thy kingdom come, and thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

#### IV

Our Father who art in heaven, who also art not less on earth, peopling every point of space with thy presence, and filling every point of spirit with thy power, thy wisdom, and thy love, we would lift up our souls unto thee, and gather together our scattered and estrayed spirits, that we may hold communion with thee for a moment in our prayer, and be strengthened for daily duty, and made newly grateful for joys which thou givest us, more faithful to ourselves and more reliant upon thee.

We know that thou wilt remember us, nor needest thou to be entreated in our morning psalm or morning prayer, for before our heart knows our need of thee, thou art with our heart, and sustaineth and givest us life. Father, we know that though earthly friends may prove faithless, though distance of space and



length of time may hide the child from the mother that bore him, yet thine eye never slumbers nor sleeps, and thou rememberest us when mortal friends forsake us, or when time and distance shut out the affections of the mortal heart. Yea, Lord, the distance is no distance with thee, for thy presence shineth everywhere as the day, and thy loving-kindness waits on the footsteps of morning, and thou fillest up the shades of evening, and givest to thy beloved, even in their sleep.

Father in heaven, we thank thee for all this world of thy providence, so fertile in wonders, so rich in beauty to every hungering sense of man. We thank thee that thou carest for the ground, that nightly thou waterest it with dews from heaven, and in thine own season sendest the river of waters in plenteous showers to moisten field, and garden, and hill, and town. Father, we thank thee for thy loving-kindness and thy tender mercy, that thou watchest over every little fly spreading his thin wings in this morning's sun, and holdest this system of universes in thine own arms of infinite and never-ending love.

We thank thee for the beauty which thou bringest forth in every stream of water, on every hillside, and that wherewith thou fringest the paths of men as they pass to their daily work. We bless thee for the beauty which thou gatherest in the lily's fragrant cup, clothing it with a kinglier loveliness than Solomon in all his glory could ever put on; and in these flowers of earth, and in those imperishable flowers of beauty over our heads, we read, O Lord, the alphabet of thy loving-kindness and thy tender mercy. But we thank thee still more that in a tenderer and lovelier and holier way thou revealest thy loving-kindness and thy tenderness and thy holiness of heart to thy children.



We thank thee for the large faculties with which thou hast gifted the children of men. We thank thee for the senses that take hold of the world of sight and touch and sound, and are fed and beautified thereon. We thank thee for these spiritual powers which lay hold of justice and truth, and love and faith in thee, these flowers of the soul, these imperishable stars of the human spirit; and we bless thee for thy yet greater loving-kindness and tender mercy which thou speakest to our souls. We thank thee that, as thou feedest the little grass by the road-side and every flower of the field with dew by night and rain by day, and warmest and waterest their roots, so thine inspiration falls down upon the souls of thy children, and thou feedest this strong and flamelike flower with thine own wisdom, thine own justice, thy holiness, and thy love.

Lord, what shall we render to thee for the least of the mercies which thou hast given us? We pray thee that we may live as blameless as the flowers of the field; that our lives within may be as fragrant, and without as fair, and that what is promise in our spring, what is blossom in our summer, may in the harvest of heaven bear fruit of everlasting life.

We look unto thee, and we will not pray thee that thou wilt remember us. We know that though a mother may forget the babe that she has borne, thou never forsakest a single child of thine. In sorrow we turn our eyes to thee, and thou wipest the tears from our eyelids; in darkness we look up to thee, and it is all light within our soul. When those that are nearest and dearest to our heart have gone down to the sides of the pit, O Lord, we know that the mortal is rendered up that the soul may be clothed with im-

mortality, and inherit everlasting joys with thee. When our own heart cries out against us, we know that thou art greater than our heart, and no folly, no wandering, and no sin can ever hide us from thine infinite motherliness. We bless thee that all thine ordinances are designed for our good, that the rod of thine affliction and the staff of our support, they both comfort us, for thou still art our Shepherd, and leadest us beside the still waters, and wilt feed us in the full pastures and give peace to our soul.

O thou our God, we pray thee that we may be strengthened for every day's duty, have patience to bear any cross that is laid upon us, wisdom to order our pathway aright, the heart of holiness to trust thee with an absolute faith, and the soul that is full of loving-kindness to do good to our brothers here on the earth. So may thy kingdom come, and thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

## V

O thou Creating and Protecting Power, who art our Father, yea, our Mother not the less, we flee unto thee, and would lift up the psalm of our thanksgiving unto thee, and by our prayer seek to hold communion with thy spirit, and be strengthened for the cares and the duties and the delights of our mortal life. We come before thee, O Lord, with the remembrance of daily toils, and the common things of life still murmuring in our ears, and we would lift up our souls unto thee, to learn new wisdom, to acquire more justice, to feel a deeper philanthropy and a heartier piety in our own souls. We know that thou art not to be worshiped as though thou asketh even prayer at our poor lips, for we know that thou ever watchest over us, and fold-

est the universe in thine arms of love, needing no prayer of ours to kindle thy sympathy to the humblest of thy creatures. O Lord, the earth is thine altar, and the heavens over our head, they are the incense of creation offered in their beauty to thy greatness and thy glorious name. O Lord, the universe is a voice of thanksgiving unto thee, and in serene and cloudy days this flying globe lifts up her voice, and sings to thee, morning and evening and at noon of day, her continual psalm of joy and praise. But our hearts in their poverty constrain us to flee unto thee, out of the sorrows and the joys of this world, to praise thee for thy blessings, and to ask of thee new glories in time to come. We desire to be deeply conscious of thy presence, which fills all time, which occupies all space. We would know thee as thou art, and in our souls feel continually thy residence with us and the abiding of thy spirit in our heart.

Father, we thank thee for this wondrous and lovely world in which thou hast placed us. For the magnificent beauty of summer we thank thee, for the storied promise of the spring which has gone by, and the earnest of the harvest, whose weeks in their fulfilment bring daily new tokens of thy goodness and thine infinite love. We thank thee that thou waterest the earth with rain from thine own sweet heavens, rejoicing the cattle on a thousand hills, which thou also carest for, as for thy chosen ones, and ministerest life to every little moss amid the stones of a city, and feedest the mighty forests which clothe with verdure our own New England hills. We thank thee that thou givest us grass for the cattle, and corn to strengthen the frame of man, and orderest all things by number and measure and weight, wielding the whole into a

mighty mass of usefulness and a glorious orb of transcendent beauty. We bless thee for the beautiful amid the homely, the sublime among things low, for the good amid evil things, and the eternal amid what is transient and daily passing from our eye.

We thank thee for the happiness that attends us in our daily life, for the joys of our daily work, for the success which thou givest to the labors of our hand, and the strength to our soul which comes from our daily toil on the earth. We thank thee for the plain and common household joys of life, for the satisfactions of friendship, for the blessedness of love in all the dear relationships of mortal life. Father, we thank thee for the large sympathy with our brothermen everywhere, and that we know that thou hast made them all alike in thine own image, and has destined all thy children to toil on the earth, and to a glorious immortality of never-ending blessedness beyond the grave.

Father, we thank thee that we know thee, that amid hopes that so often deceive us, amid expectations that fail and perish, we have still our faith assured in thee, who art without variableness or shadow of turning. O Lord, thou delightest us still more when we remember that our life itself is the gift of thine hand. In our sorrow and sadness we look up to thee, and when mortal friends fail us, and the urn that held our treasured joys is broken into fragments, and the wine of life is scattered at our feet, O Lord, we rejoice to know that thou understandest our lot, and wilt make every sorrow of our life turn out for our endless welfare, and our continual growth, so that thou wilt take us home to thyself with no stain of weeping on our face. O Lord, when ourselves have been false, when



our own hearts cry out against us, and we stain our daily sacrifice with remorseful tears, we rejoice to know that thou art greater than our heart, and wilt bring home every wandering child of thine, with no stain of sin on our immortal soul. Father, we thank thee that amid the joys of the flesh, amid the delights of our daily work, and all the sweet and silent blessedness of mortal friendship and love upon the earth, thou givest us the joy of knowing thee, the still and calm delight of lying low in thy hand, and feeling the breath of thy spirit upon us. Yea, Lord, we thank thee that thou holdest each one of us, yea, all of thy children, and the universe itself, as a mother folds her baby to her bosom, and blessest us all with thine infinite loving-kindness and thy tender mercy.

O Father, we pray thee that we may never be false to the great glories with which thou surroundest us, under our feet, and over our head, and the still diviner glories which thou placest in our heart and soul. We pray thee that within us our lives may be blameless, every faculty active and at its work, and that our outward lives may be useful, and all our existence blameless and beautiful in thy sight, O Lord, our Strength and our Redeemer. May our lives be marked every day by some new lesson that we have learned, some duty that we have done, some faithfulness that we have accomplished; and at last, when our mortal pilgrimage is ended, take us to thyself, O Lord, to dwell with thee, leaving behind us the memory of good deeds, and bearing with us a soul disciplined by the trials of life, and enlarged by its blessings. So may we pass from glory to glory, till we are changed into thine own image, and the peace of thy love is made perfect in us. So may thy kingdom come, and thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.



## VI

Our Father who art in heaven, who fillest all time with thine eternity and all space with thy loving-kindness and thy tender mercy, we flee unto thee once more, seeking to deepen our consciousness of thee, to pour out our heart's gratitude for thy daily blessings continually given unto us, and to seek new inspiration from thy spirit, extending everywhere.

O Father, we thank thee for this world about us, and above us, and underneath our feet, which thou hast given us to dwell in. We thank thee for the ground that we tread on, for the trees that roof us over, for the bread that we eat, and for the fleeces that we wear.

Father, we thank thee for all this wonderful beauty wherein thou speakest to the awakening sense of man. We bless thee for the day, which from thy golden urn thou pourest out upon the world, and that every morning thou baptizest anew each speck of earth with heaven's own light. We thank thee that thou whitenest the darkness of the night by the moon's untiring beauty, and that thou pasturest the stars in thine own fields of boundless space, nor sufferest thou a single fleece of light ever to be lost, thou Shepherd of the earth, and Shepherd of the sky.

We thank thee for this nobler world of man, for its serener day, its light more heavenly, and all the blessed stars of consciousness that shine within our soul. We thank thee, that thou makest us capable to understand the material world that is about us, and to rule and master by wisdom, by justice, and by love, this greater, nobler world that we are.

We thank thee for the still and silent joys that

come to every earnest and holy heart. We bless thee for the happiness that attends our daily work, and all the things which thou givest us to do here on the earth.

We thank thee that thou hast given us this immortal soul, which, feeding on the earth, grows for what is more than earthly, and with great hungering of heart, reaches ever upwards for what is perfect, for what is good and beautiful and holy in thine own sight. We thank thee that, as thou feedest every plant with dew from heaven, and with light from the world's great sun, so with sweet influence thou rainest inspiration down upon thy children, and with thy loving-kindness wilt bless every soul, though wandering oftentimes from thee.

We remember before thee our daily lives, the perplexities of our business, the trials of our patience, the doubts, and the darkness, yea, and the sin that doth most easily beset us; and we pray thee that we may be warned by all that we suffer, and urged onwards by everything that we enjoy, till we have cast behind us the littleness of our childhood, and with manly, womanly dignity, pursue our march on earth, not weary though we run, and not fainting as we mount up like eagles towards thy perfection.

We remember before thee the disappointments, the sadness, and the affliction of our mortal life. We remember how often our arms are folded around emptiness, when the mortal whom we truly love has taken wings to itself and is immortal with thee.

Father, we pray thee that thou wilt instruct us in these, our earthly misfortunes, and by every disappointment, and all affliction, may we grow wiser, and purer, more holy-hearted still; and while in our feeble-

ness we may not thank thee for what thou hast taken, O Lord, let us learn from sorrow a deeper lesson than joy and gladness ever bring. Even as the night reveals a whole heaven of stars, so may the darkness of disappointment, the night of sorrow, open heaven to thy children's eyes, till brighter beams are about us, and the consciousness of immortality fills up our souls and wipes the tears from every eye.

So may all our mortal life be a journey upwards, and we fly forwards towards thee, till, at last, may thy truth, fill our understanding, may thy justice enlarge our heart and may love and holiness and faith in thee subdue every unholy thing, and change us anew to thine own image, O thou who art our Father and the Mother of our souls. So may thy kingdom come, and thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

## VII

O thou Infinite Spirit, who fillest all the air that is about us, the ground underneath our feet, the heavens above our heads, who thyself art the spirit whereby and wherein we live and move and have our being, we would draw near to thee, who art never withdrawn from us, and feeling thine infinite presence in our heart and soul, would worship with our morning prayer, that we may serve thee in our daily, nightly, long-continuing life. O thou, who art the life of all things that live, and the being of whatsoever exists, we pray thee that thine infinite soul may stir us in our poor prayer, and quickened by thine infinite love may we ascend in our aspiring flight to higher and higher flights of nobleness, and human growth.

O Lord, we bless thee for thy providence which broods over the world and blesses it with this four-

fold year. We bless thee for the summers and autumns that are gone by, for the winter whose brilliant garment of resplendant snow has been so broadly spread across the shoulders of the continent, yea Lord, for all the providence whereby in winter thou preparest for spring, and makest the golden summer the forerunner of autumn, radiant with beauty and abounding in fruit.

O Lord, Father and Mother of the ground, the heavens, and all things that are, we bless thee for thy loving-kindness and thy tender mercy, we thank thee that thou art kind and bountiful in thy providence to every created thing, that from thy hand we take our daily bread, and from thy cup thou pourest out to us all things whereby we live and are blessed. We thank thee that thou watchest over us in our prosperity and in our distress, and followest the exile from his native land, giving the wanderer thy blessing, and when despair comes to thy children's heart that thou who knowest their weakness, takest them home to thyself and blessest every wanderer with thine infinite peace, whence no soul shall ever be exiled long.

O Lord, we thank thee for noble men that thou raisest up in the world, for those great souls who proclaim truth to mankind, for those who reveal justice to the earth, enacting it into laws and institutions, building up thy righteousness, thine ever-living truth. We thank thee for those great souls to whom thou confidest the precious charge of genius, blessing them with lofty gifts. We thank thee for the sons of song, waking sweet music in the hearts of men, and when their own body crumbles in the ground that their breath still surrounds the world with an ever-new morning of melody, coming to highest



and lowest, and blending all into one magnificent family of souls who are lifted up by the sweet strains of art. O Lord, we thank thee also for those sons of genius who with kindred power stretch out their plastic hand over the hard elements of earth, which become pliant at their touch. Father, we thank thee for the creative genius of the sculptor which folds the kindred genius in brazen swaddling bands, and so hands down form and lineaments, all glorified by art from age to age.<sup>2</sup> O Lord, we bless thee for another power which is music and sculpture to other faculties, for the poet's kindling eye, his wide embracing heart, his vision, and his faculty divine, whereby to listening crowds he interprets the spontaneous feelings of our hearts and makes perpetual in speech the transient feelings of the hour. O Lord, we thank thee for these whom thou hast blessed with creative genius in the intellectual sphere, and the moral; still more do we bless thee for those whom thou hast gifted with genius for loving-kindness and tender mercy, whose art is the art to love, and who in affection embalm such as are near and dear, and put great, all-embracing arms about the universe of men, lifting up the fallen, refining the low, raising those that are dropped down, and encouraging the sons of men. O Father, while we bless thee for the sons of poetry and the children of song, and those great geniuses born for creative art, still more do we bless thee for the dear fathers and the loving mothers, and the great philanthropists of the world who have blessed us with more than music, and make perpetual thy beneficence, which shall endure when the marble shall perish and brass exhales as vapor unseen and forgotten to the sky.

O thou, who blessest us with manifold gifts we would



ask of thee a double portion of the spirit of love, that while we serve thee with our hands, while we honor thee with our mind, while we serve thee with our conscience, we may serve thee more nobly still in sweet sacrificing love. May we so love thee, O Lord, that we shall feel thy spirit in us, that thy truth shall make us free, thy law be a lamp to our feet and a staff to our hands, and the love which thou bearest to every mute and every living thing a great welcome inspiration in our soul, bringing down every vain thing which unduly exalts itself, making us of cleaner eyes than to love iniquity, and setting our affections on things divine. O Lord, help us to love our brothers everywhere, not those alone who love us with answering touch of joy, but those who evil entreat and persecute and defame us. So may we be like thyself, causing thy sun to shine on the evil and on the good, and raining thy rain on the just and the unjust. O Father, we ask thee for thy kingdom of heaven, its righteousness and mercy and love within our heart. May we chastise ourselves for every mean and wicked thing, set our soul in tune to the music of thine own spheres, and so hand in hand, accordant, journey round the world, blessing thee with toilsome hands, and inwardly blessed by the spirit thou puttest in our soul.

### VIII

O thou Infinite Spirit, who art everywhere that the light of day sheds down its glorious luster, and in the caverns of the earth where the light of day cometh not, we would draw near to thee and worship thy spirit, which at all times is near to us. O thou Infinite One, who art amidst all the silences of nature, and forsakest us not with thy spirit where the noisy feet of men

are continually heard, we pray thee that the spirit of prayer may be in us while we lift up our hearts unto thee. Thou askest not even our gratitude, but when our cup is filled with blessings to the brim and runneth over with bounties, we would remember thee who fillest it, and givest every good and precious gift.

Father, we thank thee for the special material blessings which we enjoy; for the prosperity which has attended the labors of thy children in the months that are past, for the harvest of corn and of grass which the hand of man, obedient to his toilsome thought, has gathered up from the surface of the ground. We bless thee that when our toil has spoken to the earth, the furrows of the field have answered with sufficient, yea, with abundant returns of harvest to our hand. We thank thee for the blessings of the deep, and treasures hid in the sands, which thy children have gathered. We bless thee for the success which has come to those who go down to the sea in ships and do business in great waters. We thank thee for the treasures which our mining hand has gathered from the foldings of the earth, the wealth which we have quarried from the mountain, or digged out from the bosom of the ground. And we bless thee for the other harvests which from these rude things the toilsome hand and the laborious thought of men have created, turning use into beauty also, and so adorning and gladdening the world.

We thank thee for the special blessings that come near to us this day. We bless thee for the health of our bodies, and we thank thee for those who are near and dear to us; and for all the gladsome gatherings together which this day will bring to pass, of parents and their children, long severed, or of the lover and

his beloved, who so gladly would become one. We bless thee for all those who this day shall break their bread in common, lifting up their hearts unto thee, and blessing the hand which lengthens out our days and keeps the golden bowl from breaking at the fountain; and we thank thee for those who in many a distant place are still of us,—severed in the body, but with us yet in soul.

We remember before thee not only our families and our homes, but likewise the great country in which thou hast cast the lines of our lot. We thank thee for its wide extent, for the great riches which the toil of man has here gathered together and stored up. We bless thee for the multitudes of people, an exceeding great company of men and women, who here have sprung into existence under thy care. We bless thee that in this land the exile from so many a clime can find a home, with none to molest nor to make him afraid. We thank thee for every good institution which has here been established, for all the truth that is taught in the church, for what of justice has become the common law of the people, and for all of righteousness and of benevolence which goes forth in the midst of our land.

We bless thee for our fathers who in centuries past, in the name of thy holy spirit, and for the sake of rights dearest to mankind, went from one country to another people, and in their day of small things came here. Yea, we thank thee for those whose only communion was an exile, and we bless thee for the bravery of their spirit which would not hang the harp on the willow, but sang songs of thanksgiving in a strange land, and in the midst of their wilderness builded a new Zion up, full of thanksgiving and song and praise.

We bless thee for our fathers of a nearer kin, who in a day of peril strove valiantly that they might be free, and bequeathed a noble heritage to their sons and daughters who were to come after them. Yea, we thank thee for those whose sacrament was only a revolution, and the cup of blessing was of blood drawn from their own manly veins; and we bless thee for the hardy valor which drew their sword, and sheathed it not till they had a large place, and their inalienable rights secured to them by their own right hand, toiling and striving under the benediction of thy precious providence. Now, Lord, we thank thee that the few have become a multitude, and the little vine which our fathers planted with their tears and watered with their blood, reaches from sea to sea, great clusters of riches hanging on every bough, and its root strong in the land.

But we remember before thee the great sins which this nation has wrought, and while we thank thee for the noblest heritage which man ever inherited from man, we must mourn also that we have blackened the ground with crimes such as seldom a nation has committed against thee. Yea, Lord, even our thanksgiving prayer must be stained with our tears of mourning, and our psalm of thanksgiving must be mingled with the wail of those who lament that they have no hope left for them in the earth. Father, we remember our brothers of our own kin and complexion whom wickedness has smitten down in another land, whose houses are burned and their wives given up to outrage. We remember those who walk only in chains this day, and are persecuted for their righteousness' sake. And still more in our prayer we remember the millions of our brothers whom our fathers chained, and whose fetters our wicked hands have riveted upon their limbs. O



Lord, we pray thee that we may suffer from these our transgressions, till we learn to eschew evil, to break the rod of the oppressor, and to let the oppressed go free; yea, till we make our rulers righteousness, and those chief amongst us whose glory it is to serve mankind by justice, by fidelity, and by truth.

We pray thee, on this day of our gratitude, that we may rouse up everything that is humanest in our heart, pledging ourselves anew to do justly and to love mercy, and to walk humbly before thee, O thou our Father and our Mother on earth and in the heavens too. Thus, Lord, may our thanksgiving be worthy of the nature thou hast given us and the heritage thou hast bequeathed. Thus may our psalm of gratitude be a hymn of thanksgiving for millions who have broken off their chains, and for a great country full of joy, of blessedness, of freedom, and of peace. So may thy kingdom come, and thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

THANKSGIVING DAY.

## IX

O thou Infinite One, who fillest the ground under our feet and the heavens over our head, whither shall we go from thy spirit or whither shall we flee from thy presence? If we take the wings of the morning and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there shall thy hand lead us, and thy right hand shall hold us up. If we say, Surely the darkness shall cover us, even the darkness shall be light about us; yea, the darkness hideth not from thee, but the darkness and the light are both alike to thee.

Father, we know that at all times and in every place thou wilt remember us, nor askest thou the persuasive



music of our morning hymn, nor our prayer's poor utterance, to stir thy loving-kindness towards us; for thou carest for us when sleep has sealed our senses up and we heed thee no more; yea, when enveloped in the smoke of human ignorance or of folly, thine eye is still upon us, thou understandest our needs, and doest for us more and better than we are able to ask, or even to think. But in our feebleness and our darkness, we love to flee unto thee, who art the light of all our being, the strength of all which is strong, the wisdom of what is wise, and the foundation of all things that are; and while we lift up our prayer of aspiration unto thee, and muse on thy presence with us, and the various events of our life, the fire of devotion must needs flame in our heart, and gratitude dwell on our tongue.

Father, we thank thee for the world about us and above and beneath. We bless thee for the austere loveliness of the wintry heavens, for those fixed or wandering fires which lend their splendor to the night, for the fringe of beauty wherewith thou borderest the morning and the evening sky, and for this daily sun sending his roseate flush of light across the white and wintry world. We thank thee for all the things that are kindly to our flesh, which our toil has won from out the brute material world.

We bless thee for all the favorable things that are about us; for those near and dear to us, whom we watch over, and those who long since watched over and blessed us. We thank thee for wise words spoken to us in our childhood or our youth, for the examples of virtue which were round us, and for the tender voice which spoke to our spirit in early days, and wakened in us a sense of reverence, of love, and of trust in thy spirit. We thank thee for the fathers and mothers

who bore us, for the kinsfolk, the friends, the acquaintance, and the teachers, who brought us reverently up; for all the self-denial which watched over our cradles, which held our head when our heart was sick, sheltering us from the world's hardness, holding up our childish hands when they hung down, and guiding our tottering footsteps when we ran giddy in the paths of youth. Yea, we thank thee for all the examples of excellence, the words of kindly remonstrance and virtuous leading, which have been a lamp to our path, showing us the way in which we should go.

We thank thee for the noble institutions which have come down to us; for the Church, with its many words of truth and its recollections of ancient piety; for the State, with its wise laws; for the community, which puts its social hospitable walls about us from the day of our birth till we are cradled again in our coffin, and the sides of the pit are sweet to our crumbling flesh.

We remember before thee the ages that are past and gone, and thank thee for the great men whom thou causedest to spring up in those days, great flowers of humanity, whose seeds have been scattered broadcast along the world, making the solitary place into a garden and the wilderness to blossom like a rose. We bless thee for the great men who founded the State, and for the inventors of useful things, large-minded men who thought out true ideas, and skilful-handed folk who made their lofty thought an exceeding useful thing. We thank thee for those strong men of science in whose hands the ark of truth has been borne ever onward from age to age, for poets and philosophers whose deep vision beheld the truth when other men perceived it not, and for those gifted women

whose presentient soul ran before the mighty prophet's thoughtful eye, forefeeling light when yet the very East was dark with night. Yea, we thank thee for the goodly fellowship of all these prophets of glory, the glorious company of such apostles, and the noble army of martyrs, who were faithful even unto death.

Chiefiest of all do we bless thee for that noble son of thine, born of a peasant mother and a peasant sire, who in days of great darkness went before men, his life a pillar of fire leading them unto marvelous light and peace and beauty. We thank thee for his words, so lustrous with truth, for his life, fragrant all through with piety and benevolence; yea, Lord, we bless thee for the death which sinful hands nailed into his lacerated flesh, where through the wounds the spirit escaped triumphant unto thee, and could not be holden of mortal death. We thank thee for the triumphs which attend that name of Jesus, for the dear blessedness which his life has bestowed upon us, smoothing the pathway of toil, softening the pillow of distress, and brightening the way whereon truth comes down from thee, and life to thee goes ever ascending up. Father, we thank thee for the blessings which this great noble soul has widely scattered throughout the world, and most of all for this, that his spark of fire has revealed to us thine own divinity enlivening this mortal human clod, and prophesying such noble future of achievement here on earth and in thine own kingdom of heaven with thee.

Father, we thank thee also for the unmentioned martyrs, for the glorious company of prophets whom history makes no written record of, but whose words and whose lives are garnered up in the great life of humanity.

O Lord, we bless thee for all these, and, in our own

day, when thou hast given us so many talents and the opportunity so glorious for their use, we pray thee that we may distinguish between the doctrines of men and thine eternal commandments, and that no reverence for the old may blind our eyes to evils that have come down from other days, and no fondness for new things ever lead us to grasp the hidden evil when we take the specious good; but may we separate between the right and the wrong, and choose those things that are wise to direct, and profitable for our daily use. O Lord, when we compare our own poor lives with the ideal germ which warms in our innermost soul, longing to be itself a strong and flame-like flower, we are ashamed that our lives are no better, and we pray thee that in time present and in all time to come we may summon up the vigor of our spirit, and strive to live lives of such greatness and nobleness that we shall bless our children and all who come after us, giving them better institutions than ourselves have received, and bequeathing to them a more glorious character than was transmitted to us. May we cultivate every noble faculty of our nature, giving to every limb of the body its proper place and enjoyment, and over all the humbler faculties may we enthrone the great commanding powers, which shall rule and regulate our life into order and strength and beauty, and fill our souls with the manifold delight of those who know thee and serve thee and love thee with all their understanding and all their heart.

In the stern duties which are before us, Father in heaven, may thy light burn clear in our tabernacle, and when thou callest us may our lamps be trimmed and burning, our loins girt about, our feet ready sandaled for the road, and our souls prepared for thee. Thus



may thy kingdom come, and thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

## X

O thou Infinite Spirit, who art present where two or three are gathered together, and who with all thine infinite perfections encampest about each solitary soul, we would draw near unto thee, who art never far from any one of us, and in thy presence gird up our souls and worship thee with such communion and income of spirit in our morning prayer that we shall serve thee all our life, bearing with patience our daily cross, and reverently doing with strength the duties thou givest us to do. May we worship thee who art spirit, with our spirit and the truth of every faculty; and wilt thou, who seekest such to worship thee, accept the psalm of our lips and the aspiring of our heart.

O thou Infinite One, we thank thee for the winter with which thou hast overcast the world, for we know that in every flake of snow thou sheddest from the heavens thou hast a benediction writ for all mankind, could our eyes but read the lustrous prophecy so curiously announced.

We thank thee that thou givest to mankind, in our body and in our soul, the power over these material things that are about us. We thank thee that in the midst of the winter's snow we can build us our pleasant habitation, and have a perennial summer all safe from winter's desolating frost. We thank thee for the large power thou hast given us to make even the storms serve the voyage of our life, and to use the very ice of northern realms as the servant of man's pleasure and the handmaid of his health. Father, we bless thee for the



wondrous faculties which thou hast treasured up within the frame of man.

We bless thee for all periods in our life. We thank thee for the infancy, which is from thine own kingdom of heaven, cradled in love on earth, the little flower prophetic of other love that is to come, given not less than received, in the never-ending progress of the immortal soul. We thank thee for the period of the young man's and the young woman's life, when the body, unwonted to the experience of the world, runs over with the vernal energies of life's incipient year. We thank thee for the energy of passion, and the power of soul which thou givest us to tame this creature into wise and virtuous strength. We bless thee for the high hopes, the generous aspirations, and the quick and mounting instincts of the soul, which belong to the young man's life. We bless thee for the hardier vigor of the middle-aged, whom experience has made more wise, and we thank thee that frequent stumbling bids us take heed to our ways, and by many a failure and fall mankind is warned of the difficulties that beset his path. We thank thee for the mighty power of will that can restrain passion in its instinctive swing, and hold ambition from its wicked aim, which else might mar and desolate the soul. We thank thee for the yet later period, when thou crownest the experienced head with silver hairs without, and within higest up the manifold treasures of long-continued life. Father, we thank thee for the instinctive power of the young, the sober calculating strength of the middle-aged, and the long-treasured glories of old men, found in the paths of righteousness, whose head is a lamp of white fire carried before us to warn us of the wrong, and to guide thy children to ever-increasing heights of human excellence.

O Lord, we pray thee that we may all of us use so nobly the nature thou hast given us, that in early, or in middle, or in advanced life, there may be such a strength of pious trust in thee as shall give thy children the victory in the day of their youth, and they may overcome the passions which else would war against the soul; and, in the middle way of mortal life, may it abate the excessive zeal of ambitious selfishness, and bring down all covetousness and every proud thing that unduly exalts itself against thee; and in the later days of mankind, may it be a strong staff in the old man's hand, and a lamp full of heavenly fire which goes before his experienced feet, guiding him still farther forward, still higher upward, and leading to serene and blameless abodes of beauty and of oneness with thee.

O thou Infinite One, we thank thee for the opportunities of our daily life. And for its trials, shall we not thank thee? If in our feebleness we dare not thank thee for the crosses that are laid on us and the disappointments which vex our mortal affections, still, O Lord, we will bow our faces before thee, and with thankful hearts exclaim, The Lord giveth, let him take away when he will.

Father, we pray thee that we may live so generous and aspire so high that our noblest prayer shall be the practice of our daily life, and so by continual ascension we shall rise up towards thee, enriched from thy fulness of joy, and the gladness and peace which thou givest, with no miracle, to every earnest and aspiring child of thine. So may thy kingdom come, and thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

## XI

O thou Infinite Presence, who art close to each of us, we would draw near to thee, and lift up our souls unto thee, who art to be worshiped in spirit and in truth. O Lord, whither shall we flee from thy spirit, or whither shall we go from thy presence? In the beauty of summer thou wert with us, and out of genial skies sent down thy sweet beatitude of loving-kindness and tender mercy, and in the midst of winter thou art with us still, in the ground under our feet and the heavens above our head, and thine exceeding precious providence tempers even the austerity of the season for the world's great wants.

Father, we thank thee for all the periods of our earthly life. We bless thee that we are born of thy kingdom of heaven and come into this world, darting before us the prophetic rays of noble growth in times that are to come. Yea, we thank thee that from this morning dawn of infancy there goes out so fair and glorious a light, adorning the little home, and shedding its splendor far up the sky, leading the parental vision farther and farther on. We bless thee for the young men and women, and the middle-aged, for their stalwart strength of body and mind, their vigorous hope, and their power to do, to be, and to suffer, and to grow greater and greater. We thank thee for the duties which thou givest thy children to do, and the strength with which thou girdest their loins, and the power with which thou anointest their heads. We remember before thee the venerable face and the hoary hairs, which thou givest as the crown of life to those who pass on in the journey of time, doing its duties, bearing its cross, and tasting its cup of joy and of

grief. We thank thee for the strong beauty of venerable age when it is found in the way of righteousness, and the firm and manly form goes before mankind, with the light of righteousness shining white and beauteous from the aged head.

O Lord, we thank thee for the blessed light of immortality which thou sheddest down on all the periods of human life, shining in its morning freshness on the baby's cradle, tending in its meridian march the progress of the grown man, and for the evening brilliancy, the many-colored rays of hope and beauty, wherewith it silvers the countenance of the old man. O Lord, when thou takest to thyself, out of the midst of us, the young, the middle-aged, or those venerable with accumulated time and manifold righteousness, we thank thee that we know they but rest from their labors, and their good works, gathered up in their character, follow them, and shine with them as a raiment of glory in the kingdom of heaven, brightening and brightening for ever and for ever, unto still more perfect day.

O Lord, we thank thee for our fathers who brought us up, who have gone before us and blessed us with manifold kindness and tenderness; and we bless thee also for the mothers who bore and carefully tended us, and watched over our little heads, and trained our infantile feet to walk in the ways of pleasantness and in the paths of peace.

We thank thee for the noble nature which thou hast given to woman, for the various faculties wherein she differs from man, for her transcendent mind which anticipates his slower thought. We bless thee for her generous instincts of morality, of loving-kindness and tender mercy, and that deep religious power of intui-



tion whereby she communes with thy spirit face to face, and knows thee and loves thee with an exceeding depth of noble heart. We thank thee for the great and lustrous women of other times and our own age, who spoke as they were moved by thy spirit, or who, with lives more eloquent than speech, ran before the world's great prophets and redeemers, smoothing the pathway which rougher feet were yet to tread, and shedding the balsam of their benediction on the air which mankind was to breathe. We bless thee for the noble and generous women in our own day, engaged in the various callings and lots of human life. We thank thee for those who relieve the sick, who recall the wandering from the way of wickedness, who smooth the pillow of suffering, who teach and instruct those that are ignorant, who lift up such as are fallen down, and overtake the aged or the juvenile wanderers who are outcasts from the world. Father, we thank thee for all these blessings which thou givest to the world in this portion of humanity.

We bless thee for those noble and generous emotions which thou hast placed within the soul of man, for the continual progress which they are making, and the certainty of their triumph at last over all malice, and wrath, and hate, and everything which makes war on the earth. We thank thee for the far-reaching love that goes out towards those who need the assistance of our arm, and for that feeling, stronger than the earthly interests of the body, which leads us to forgive every wrong which our brothers trespass against us.

We bless thee for the religious faculty which thou hast placed here within us, that in our darkness it gives us something of morning light, and, when other things



fail and pass away, it breaks through the clouds, and looks up to thine own kingdom of eternal peace, and there finds comfort and rest for the soul. O Lord, we thank thee that thereby thou art to us exceeding near, strengthening us in our weakness, enlightening in our ignorance, warning in temptation; and, when we go stooping and feeble, our faces bowed down with sorrow, we thank thee that in the midst of this outer darkness, in our heart it is all full of glorious light, and thy presence is there, and thy peace is spread abroad on the afflicted and mourning one.

Father, when thou gatherest to thyself those who are of our earthly family, changing their countenance and taking them away from our arms, if we are not strong enough to thank thee for all the angels which descend and come into our house and bear away thence those whom our hearts most tenderly do love, still we thank thee that we know it is thine angel which comes, and thou sendest him here on an errand of mercy, and we thank thee that our soul can follow along the luminous track which the fiery chariot of Death has left behind, and our eye can rest on the spiritual form now clothed with immortality, and dearer to us still than when on earth. We thank thee that through all the clouds of grief and sorrow thy Holy Ghost comes down with quickening influence, bringing healing on his wings, and shedding abroad the glorious sacrament of consolation on eyes that weep, and stealing into the most secret heart that mourns.

Father, we remember before thee those who are needy, who in this inclement season of the year are pinched with cold, whom hunger looks sternly in the face, and we pray thee that our own hearts may be opened to do good and to communicate to those who

need our service, and whom our alms-giving may doubly bless.

Help us, O thou Infinite Father, to use the nature thou hast given us wisely and well. We would not ask thee to change thy law, the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever, but pray that ourselves may accord our dispositions to thine own infinite excellence, and order the outgoings and incomings of our heart in such wisdom that our lives shall continually be in accordance with thy life, and that thy will shall be the law of our spirits, and thy love prevail for ever in our hearts. So may we be adorned and strengthened with manifold righteousness, mount up with wings as eagles, run and not be weary, or walk and never faint. So may thy kingdom come, and thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

## XII

O thou Infinite Spirit, who thyself art perpetual presentness, whom heaven and the heaven of heavens cannot contain, but who hast thy dwelling-place in every little flower that blooms, and in every humble heart,— we would draw near unto thee, and worship in thy presence, with such lifting up of our heart and our soul that all our daily lives may be a continual service before thee, and all our days thy days. We know that thou needest not to be worshiped, nor askest our prayer's poor homage at our lips; but, conscious of our dependence on thee, feeling our weakness and our ignorance, and remembering the blessings with which thou fillest our cup, we flee unto thee, and would pour forth the psalm of our morning prayer, that we may be strengthened and blessed by the great religious emotions which raise us up to thee.

Father, we thank thee for the exceeding beauty of this wintry day, we bless thee for the ever-welcome countenance of the sun, so sweetly looking down upon our northern land, and bidding winter flee. We thank thee for the moon which scarfs with loveliness the retreating shoulders of the night, and for all the wondrous majesty of stars wherewith thou hast spangled the raiment of darkness, giving beauty to the world when the sun withdraws his light.

Father, we thank thee for all thy precious providence which rules over the summer and the winter, the spring and the autumn, beautifying this various and fourfold year. We thank thee that thy spirit is with us even in the darkness, which is no darkness with thee, but under thy care we can lay us down and sleep in safety,—thou giving to thy beloved even in our sleep,—and when we awake we are still with thee.

We thank thee for the great land in which we live; we bless thee for its favored situation, and its wide spread from ocean to ocean, from lake to gulf. We thank thee for the millions of people who have grown up here in the midst of the continent. We bless thee for all the good institutions which are established here; we thank thee for whatsoever of justice is made into law of the State, for all of piety, of loving-kindness, and tender mercy which are taught in many a various church, and practised by noble women and earnest men.

We bless thee for our fathers, who in their day of small things put their confidence in thee, and went from one kingdom to another people, few and strangers there, and at last, guided by a religious star, came to this land, and put up their prayers in a wilderness. We thank thee that the desert place has become

a garden, and the wild forest, full of beasts and prowling men, is tenanted now with cities and beautiful with towns. We bless thee for the great men whom thou gavest us at every period of our nation's story; we thank thee for such as were wise in council, those also who were valiant in fight, and by whose right arm our redemption was wrought out. We thank thee for those noblest men and women who were filled with justice, with benevolence, and with piety, and who sought to make thy constitution of the universe the common law of all mankind. We bless thee for those whose names have gone abroad among the nations of the earth to encourage men of righteousness and to turn many from the evil of their ways.

We thank thee for the unbounded wealth which has been gathered from our fields, or drawn from the sea, or digged from the bosom of the earth, and wrought out in our manifold places of toil throughout the land. We bless thee for the schools which let light in on many a dark and barren place; and we thank thee for noble and generous men and women in our own day, who speak as they are moved by thy holy spirit, and turn many unto righteousness.

But we mourn over the wickedness that is still so common in our land; we lament at the folly and the sin of those in high place, and the others who seek high place; we lament that they tread thy people down, and bear a false witness in the land. We thank thee that the world's exiles find here a shelter and a home, with none to molest nor make them afraid; but we mourn also that the world's saddest exiles are still our own persecuted and afflicted and smitten. We remember before thee the millions of men whose hands are chained that they may not lift them up, and whose intellect

and conscience the wicked statutes of men still keep in Egyptian night. O Lord, we pray thee that we may suffer for all the wickedness that we commit, till we learn to turn off from the evil of our ways, and execute thy commandments, and follow after the righteousness which thou hast written in our heart. We pray thee that thou wilt chastise us in our property and in our lives, till we learn to put away from the midst of us the yoke of bondage, and to smite no longer with the fist of wickedness.

We remember before thee our own private lives, the joys thou givest us, our daily bread and our nightly sleep, the strength of our bodies, so wonderfully made, and the vigor and hope of our intellect, conquering the world; yea, we thank thee for the affections which join us together, and the soul which unites us to thee. We remember before thee the duties thou givest us to do, and we will not ask thee to do our work, wherefor thou hast given us sufficient strength; but we pray thee that with manly and womanly might we may exercise the faculties thou hast given us, and do our work whilst it is yet called day. May there be in us such a reverence for thy being and those qualities which are thyself, that every day we shall serve thee with blameless fidelity, and grow constantly in grace, attaining nearer and nearer to the measure of the stature of a perfect man. When we turn from thy ways, and, bleeding, come back again, may we be taught thereby to wander no more from the paths of righteousness, but ever to journey in those ways which are pleasantness and lead to peace. So may thy kingdom come, and thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.



## XIII

O thou Infinite Power, whom men call by varying names, but whose grandeur and whose love no name expresses and no words can tell; O thou Creative Cause of all, Conserving Providence to each, we flee unto thee, and would seek for a moment to be conscious of the sunlight of thy presence, that we may lift up our souls unto thee, and fill ourselves with exceeding comfort and surpassing strength. We know that thou wilt draw near unto us when we also draw near unto thee. Father, we thank thee that while heaven and the heaven of heavens cannot contain thine all-transcendent being, yet thou livest and movest and workest in all things that are, causing, guiding, and blessing all and each.

We thank thee for the lovely day which thou pourest down on the expectant world, giving the hills and the valleys a foretaste of the spring that is to come. We thank thee for the glories thou revealest to the world in darkness, where star after star travels in its far course, or to the human eye is ever fixed, and all of these speak continually of thy wisdom and thy glory, and shine by thy love's exceeding, never-ending light.

We bless thee for the love which thou bearest to all the creatures which thou hast made. We thank thee that we know that thou art our Father and our Mother, and tenderly watchest over us in manifold and secret ways, bringing good out of evil, and better thence again, leading forward thy child from babyhood to manhood, and the human race from its wild estate to far transcending nobleness of soul.

Father, we thank thee for the vast progress which mankind has made in the ages that are behind us. We

bless thee that truth is stronger than error, and justice breaks down every throne of unrighteousness, and the gentleness of love is far stronger than all the energy of wrath, and so from age to age gains the victory over the savage instincts of wild men.

We thank thee for the great men and women whom thou in all times hast raised up, the guides and teachers unto humbler-gifted men. We thank thee for the philosophers who have taught us truth, and for the great poets who have touched man's heart with the fire of heaven and stirred to noble deeps the human soul. We bless thee for those expounders of thy law whose conscience has revealed thine ever live ideas of justice, and who have taught them to men. We bless thee for those warm-hearted champions of mankind whose arms of philanthropy clasp whole nations to their heart, warmed with the noble personal life of such. Yea, we thank thee for those of great religious sense, who have taught mankind truer ideas of thee, and wisely guided the souls of men, thereby controlling passion and leading thy children in paths of pleasantness and of peace. We thank thee that in no land hast thou ever left thyself without a witness, and while material nature proclaims thy glory, and day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night showeth forth thy praise, that our human nature still more largely proclaims thy greatness and thy goodness, and the presence of thy providence, watching over all. We thank thee for the goodly fellowship of prophets in all lands, and called by many names; for the glorious company of apostles, speaking in every tongue, and the noble army of martyrs, whose blood, reddening the soil of the whole world, has made it fertile for noble human purposes.

And, while we thank thee for these, we bless thee also for the unrecorded millions of men of common faculties, who were the human soil whereon these trees of human genius stood, and grew their leaves so shady and so green, and their fruit so sound and fair. O Lord, we thank thee for the humble toiling millions of men who earnestly looked for the light, and finding walked therein, passing upward and onward towards thy kingdom, blessed by thee.

We thank thee for all the triumphs which mankind has achieved, by the few of genius or the many who have had faithful and earnest souls. We thank thee for all of truth that is demonstrated in science, for all of beauty that is writ in poetry or stamped on the rock by art. We bless thee for what of justice is recorded in books, or embodied in institutions and laws. We thank thee for that philanthropy which begins to bless the world, and here in our own land achieves such noble works. And we thank thee for what we know of true religion, of the piety that warms the innermost heart, and the morality which keeps the laws which thou hast writ.

We bless thee that in this land all men are free to worship thee as they will, or to close their eyes and look not at thine image, no human scourge laid on their earnest flesh. Father, we thank thee for the great religious ideas which have sprung down from heaven in our own day, unknown to ancient times, and for the light which they shed along the path of duty, in the way even of transgression, and for the glorious hope which they enkindle everywhere.

And while we thank thee for these things, we pray thee that we may walk faithful to the nature thou hast given us, and the light which has dawned down from

heaven all around. Father, we thank thee for the power of gratitude which thou givest to thy children, for the joy which men take in favors received from the highest or the humblest of the earth, and the far exceeding delight which comes to our soul from the consciousness of receiving blessings from thyself, who givest to mankind so liberally and upbraidest not, nor askest ever for our gratitude, but still art kind even to unthankful and to wicked men.

Father, we bless thee for such as love us and those whom we love in the varying forms of affection, thanking thee for the sacramental cup of joy in which thou givest the wine of life to all of thy children, humble or high.

Father, when we suffer in our hearts, when our houses are hung with blackness, and the shadow of death falls on the empty seat of those dear and once near to us, we know that there is mercy in all that thou sendest, and through the darkness we behold thy light, and thank thee for the lilies of Solomon that spring out of the ground which Death has burned over with his blackness and sprinkled with the ashes of our sorrow.

We remember before thee the various temptations with which we are tried, praying thee that in the hour of passion the youth may be strong and find himself a way of escape from its seductive witchery; and in the cold and more dangerous hour of ambition, when the maturer flesh so often goes astray, we pray thee that we may turn off from covetousness, from desire of power and vain-glory amongst men, and keep our souls clean and undefiled in the midst of a world where sin and wickedness walk in the broad day. Father, within our soul may there be such an earnest and strong love



of the qualities of thy being that we shall keep every law which thou hast writ on our sense or in our soul, and do justly and love mercy and walk manfully with thee, doing our duty with nobleness of endeavor, and bearing such cross as time and chance, happening to all, may lay on us. So may thy kingdom come, and thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

## XIV

O thou Perpetual Presence, whom our hearts constrain us to bow down before, and delightedly to look up to, we would draw near to thee once more, secluding our spirits for a moment from all the noises of the world, and continue the psalm of our thanksgiving by aspirations of the soul that are higher and higher yet. We know that thou rememberest us, nor needest thou the music of our psalm nor the faint warbling of our prayer to stir thy fatherly and motherly heart to bestow upon us thy tender mercy and thy loving-kindness. Yea, we know that when earthly father and mother forget us and let us fall, thou takest us up, and in thy right hand bearest thy children forward; nay, when in the wickedness of our heart or the frailty of our flesh we break thy laws and would hide our faces from thee, thou still revealest thyself in justice and in love, and in secret ways overtakest us, liftest us up when we have fallen, and ledest us from our errors and our sins.

O thou Infinite One, we thank thee for the fairness and the beauty which thou pourest down from the heavens above our head. We bless thee for the genial warmth which goes abroad in the air this day from the golden shining of the sun. We thank thee for the footsteps of spring throughout our northern land,



giving new vigor to the cattle's grass, and causing hope to spring up with the farmer's slow-ascending corn. We thank thee for the promise of the season, silent or musical, in all the tenants of the sky, and for the prophecy which begins to blossom from many a tree, foretelling the glorious summer, and the appointed weeks of harvest, which are yet to come. We thank thee for the ground under our feet, the great foodful earth, and the heavens above our head, and for the whole universe of worlds which thou hast created, and sustainest with thy presence, filling all things with life, and enchanting the whole with order and beauty and love. We thank thee that by ways which as yet we know not, thou bringest many things to pass, and makest all this globe of lands, and these heavens, and the secret forces which are hid everywhere in ocean, land, and sky, to serve the great purposes of human-kind. We thank thee for the meaning that is concealed in every stone, or which flames out in the flowers of the field or the stars of heaven, teaching wisdom to all of thy thoughtful daughters and thy sons.

Father, we thank thee for the revelation which this outward world of nature makes of thyself, that above us and about us there is continually thy presence, which shines in the stars of night, and moves in the wind by day, and grows in the grass, and all things doth pervade. We thank thee that thy providence watches over all, the world of matter and the world of conscious life; that thou orderest all of our movements, and from the beginning understandest the well-prepared end, making all things work together for thy final purpose of eternal good.

We thank thee for the noble nature which thou hast given unto man, making us the master over things

underneath our feet and above our head, and placing the elements in subjection to us all around.

We thank thee for the triumph of truth over error, to us so slow, to thyself so sure. We bless thee for every word of truth which has been spoken the wide world through, for all of right which human consciences have perceived and made into institutions.

We thank thee for that love which setteth the solitary in families at the beginning, and then reaches wide arms all around, and will not stay its hold till it joins all nations and kindreds and tongues and people into one great family of love. We bless thee for the noble men and women whose generous heart has lit the altar fire of philanthropy in many a dark and else benighted place.

We thank thee for the unbidden faith which springs up in our hearts, impelling us to trust thee and love thee and keep every commandment of thine, and that while we know not what a day shall bring forth, we are sure of everlasting life, and while our own strength is so often weakness, we know that the almightiness of thy wisdom, thy power, thy justice, and thy love, is on every living creature's side, and thou wilt bless every child of thine infinite affection. Father, we thank thee for the silent progress of the true religion, that everywhere throughout the world thou hast those that worship thee,—

“ Even that in savage bosoms  
There are longings, yearnings, strivings  
For the good they comprehend not,  
And the feeble hands and helpless,  
Groping blindly in the darkness,  
Touch thy right hand in that darkness,  
And are lifted up and strengthened.”

Father, we bless thee for the discipline of our daily life, and pray that by our experience we may grow wiser and nobler-hearted, that prosperity may teach us to be generous towards all, to be charitable towards such as we ought to help; and when sadness and adversity come over us, may they still more soften our hearts, while they confirm and strengthen our will, and lift our souls upwards to an aspiration for nobler and nobler virtues than we have hitherto attained. In the midst of our sadness, when crosses are laid on us that are hard to bear, and the bitter cup of disappointment is offered to our lips and it may not pass away, oh, may our soul be so strong that with a valiant might we shall submit us to thee, and grow stronger and richer even by our sorrow and our loss, and come forth triumphant at last, with the crown of righteousness on our brows, and the certainty of acceptance with thee in our soul. Then, when thou hast completed thine earthly work with us, wilt thou take us to thyself to be with thee for ever and ever, brightening and brightening towards the more perfect glory, as thou ledest us by thy spirit. So may thy kingdom come, and thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

## XV

O thou Infinite One, who dwellest not only in temples made with hands, but art a perpetual presence, living and moving and having thy being in every star that flowers above and every flower that flames beneath, we flee unto thee, who art always with us, and pray that we may commune with thy spirit face to face for a moment, feeling thy presence with us, and pouring out our gratitude unto thee; and amid all the noises of earth, may the still small voice of thy spirit come into

our soul, wakening our noblest faculties to new life, and causing the wings of the spirit to grow out on our mortal flesh. O thou Infinite One, we lift our thoughts unto thee, our dependent souls constraining us unto thee, that we may rest us under the shadow of thy wings, and be warmed by thy love, and sheltered and blessed by the motherly tender mercy wherewith thou regardest all of thy children. We adore and worship thee, calling thee by every name of power, of wisdom, of beauty, and of love; but we know that none of these can fully describe thee to ourselves, for thou transcendest our utmost thought of thee, even as the heavens transcend a single drop of dew which glitters in their many-colored light.

We remember before thee the manifold works of thy hand, and thy providence which hedges us in on every side. We thank thee for the genial warmth which is spread abroad along the sky, we bless thee for the green grass growing for the cattle, and the new harvest of promise just springing from the sod, foretelling bread for men in months to come. Father, we thank thee for the flowers, those later prophets of spring, which on all the New England hills now utter their fragrant foretelling of the harvest which one day shall hang from the boughs, and glitter and drop and enrich the ground.

O Lord, we thank thee for the nation within whose borders the lines of our lot have been cast. We thank thee for our fathers, men of mighty faith, who came here and planted themselves in the wilderness, few in numbers and strangers in it, and yet not weak of heart, and lifting up valiant hands before thee. We thank thee for what truth they brought, what truth they learned, and all the noble heritage which is fallen to our hands.



We bless thee for every good institution in the midst of us, for schools and churches, for the unbounded opportunity here in these Northern States to develop the freedom of our limbs, and enjoy the liberty of our souls, wherewith thou makest all men free.

We remember before thee our daily lives, and we thank thee for the bread we eat, the garments we put on, and the houses which more loosely clothe us, sheltering from the summer's heat or the winter's cold.

We bless thee for the dear ones who garment us about, sheltering us more tenderly and nearly. We bless thee for those who love us, and whom with answering love, we love back again; those under the sight of our eye, and lifting up their prayer with us, and those far severed from the touch of our hand or the hearing of our voice. We thank thee for these blessed relationships, which set the solitary in families, making twain one, and thence manifold, beautifying the world with all the tender ties which join lover and beloved, husband and wife, parent and child, and with kindred blood and kindred soul joining many children, grown or growing, into one great family of love.

Father, we thank thee for the great ideas of our own nature, and the revelation and inspiration which thou makest therein; for the grand knowledge of thyself, our Father and our Mother, full of infinite perfection, doing good to each greatest and each smallest thing, and making all things work together for the good of each. O Lord, we thank thee for the knowledge which comes from the inspiration of thy spirit working in the human soul, and human souls obedient thereunto working with thee.

We remember our own daily lives before thee, and we mourn that, gifted with a nature so large, and sur-



rounded with opportunities so admirable, we have yet often stained our bodies with our soul's transgression, and that unclean and unholy sentiments have lodged within us, yea, nestled there and been cherished and brooded over by our consciousness. We lament that we have had within us feelings which we would not that others should bear towards us, and have done unrighteous deeds. We take shame to ourselves for these things, and we pray that we may gather suffering thence and sorrow of heart, till we learn to cast these evils behind us, and live nobler and more natural lives, inward of piety, and outward of goodness towards all.

We remember our daily duties before thee, the hard toil which thou givest us in our manifold and various avocations, and we pray thee that there may be in us such a confidence in our nature, such earnest obedience to thee, we reverencing all thy qualities and keeping thy commands, that we shall serve thee every day, making all our life one great act of holiness unto thee. May our continuous industry be so squared by the Golden Rule that it shall nicely fit with the interests of all with whom we have to do, and so by our handicraft all mankind shall be blessed. We remember the temptations that are before us, when passion from within is allied with opportunity from without, and that we have so often therein gone astray; and we pray thee that the spirit of religion may be so strong within us that it shall enable us to overcome evil and prove ourselves stronger from every trial.

We remember the sorrows and the disappointments we must bear, and we pray that this same spirit of religion may lift us up when we are bowed down, and strengthen us when we are weak, and give joy of heart to our inner man when the mortal flesh weeps and our

eyes run down with tears. Yea, may we then be conscious of immortal life, and lifting up holy hearts, enjoy that kingdom of heaven which is not meat and drink, and here on earth, by the various steps of joy and sorrow, may we mount up to that high dwelling-place, where we taste those joys which the heart has not conceived of, but which thy spirit and our own spirit create for every earnest and noble and aspiring soul.

O Lord, we remember before thee our country, and while we thank thee for the noble fathers and mothers who here planted this national vine, and bless thee for the truth those men brought, and the justice which secures for us the liberty of our flesh and the freedom of our soul,—we remember also the wickedness in high places, in our Northern lands and in many a Southern State, which is throned over the necks of the people. We remember the millions of our brothermen whose chained hands cannot this day be lifted up to thee, whose minds are dark with the ignorance we have forced upon them, and whose souls are in bondage because we have fettered their feet and manacled their hands. O Lord, we pray thee that the whole nation may suffer till the Church and State be ashamed of their wickedness, and the whole people rise in their majesty and cast out this iniquity from the midst of us, and righteousness cover the land as the waters cover the sea. And we pray thee that in our humble way we may be useful in these great and good works, that our daily lives may be a gospel unto men, and the brave words that we speak and the noble sentiments that we cherish may be a prophecy of better things to come, which shall ring in the ears of the nation till they tingle and its heart also be touched. So may

thy kingdom come, and thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

## XVI

O thou Spirit who art everywhere, and watchest over us in darkness and in light, we flee unto thee, and for a moment would mingle our spirits with thine, remembering our weakness, and also our strength, rejoicing gratefully in the good things thou hast given us, and lifting up manly aspirations towards thee, who every joint supplieth, and quickeneth our soul, and seeking consciously to attain to a greater excellence than we have yet achieved here on earth. We would spread out our lives before thee, remembering our trials, our transgressions, our joys, and our sorrows, and any little triumph which we may have gained; and from these things we would gather up the materials to light our sacrifice, that its flame may go up before thee, incense from the altars of earnest hearts. May the spirit of prayer guide us in our devotions, that we may be quickened by the dew of thine inspiration and warmed by the daylight of thy providence, so that we may bloom into beauty and bear fruit to perfection in our mortal life.

We thank thee for thine infinite care and the providence which thou exerciseth over every great and every little thing; for thine higher law which rules the ground underneath our feet, and whereby the most ancient heavens are fresh and strong. O Lord, thou hast numbered the hairs of our head, and not a sparrow falleth to the ground save by thine infinite providence, blessing the hairs which thou hast numbered and caring for the sparrow in its fall.

Our Father, we thank thee for the world thou hast

placed us in. We bless thee for the heavens over our head, burning all night with such various fire, and all day pouring down their glad effulgence on the ground. We thank thee for the scarf of green beauty with which thou mantlest the shoulders of the temperate world, and for all the hopes that there are in this foodful earth, and for the rich promise of the season about us on every side.

We thank thee still more for the nature which thou hast given us, for these earthen houses of the flesh wherein we dwell, and for this atom of spirit, a particle from thine own flame of eternity which thou hast lodged in the clay.

We thank thee for the large inheritance which has come down to us from other times. We bless thee that other men labored, and whilst thou rewarded them for their toil, that we also have entered into the fruit of their labors, and gather where we have not strewed, and eat where we toiled not.

We thank thee for the noble institutions which other days have bequeathed unto us. We thank thee for those great and godly men, speaking in every tongue, inspired by thy spirit, whom thou raisedst up from age to age, bearing witness of the nobleness of man's nature, and the nearness of thy love towards all the sons and daughters of men,—their life a continual flower of piety on the earth, drawing men's eyes by its beauty, and stirring men's souls by the sweet fragrance of its heavenly flame.

Most chiefly would we thank thee for him who in an age of darkness came and brought such marvelous light to the eyes of men. We thank thee for the truths that he taught, and the glorious humanity that he lived, blessing thee that he was the truth from thee, that he



showed us the life that is in thee, and himself traveled before us the way which leads to the loftiest achievements.

We thank thee for those whose great courage in times past broke the oppressor's rod and let the oppressed go free. And we bless thee for the millions of common men, following the guidance of their leaders, faithful to their spirit, and so to thee, who went onward in this great human march, in whose bloody footsteps we gather the white flowers of peace, and lift up our thankful hands to thee.

Father, we thank thee for the men and women of great steadfastness of soul in our own times not less, who bear faithful witness against iniquity, who light the torch of truth and pass it from hand to hand, and sow the world with seeds whence in due time the white flowers of peace shall also spring. We thank thee that thy spirit is not holden, but that thou pourest it out liberally on all who lift up earnest hearts unto thee. We thank thee for the great truths which are old, and the new truths also which are great, and for the light of justice, for the glories of philanthropy, which human eyes have for the first time in this age beheld. O Lord, we thank thee that the glories which kings and prophets waited for have come down to us, and thou hast revealed unto babes and sucklings those truths which other ages yearned for and found not.

O thou who art Father and Mother to the civilized man and the savage, who with equal tenderness lookest down on thy sinner and thy saint, having no child of perdition in thy mighty human family, we remember before thee our several lives, thanking thee for the joys that gladden us, the work which our hands find to do, the joy of its conclusion, and the education of its process.



We are conscious of our follies, our transgressions, our stumblings by the wayside, and our wanderings from the paths of pleasantness and peace. We know how often our hands have wrought iniquity, and ourselves have been mean and cowardly of heart, not daring to do the right which our own souls told us of; and we pray thee that we may suffer from these things, till, greatly ashamed thereof, we turn off from them and live glorious and noble lives.

We thank thee, O Father, for those who make music about our fireside, whose countenance is a benediction on our daily bread, fairer to us than the flowers of earth or the stars of heaven. We thank thee for those newly born into this world, bringing the fragrance of heaven in the infant's breath; and if we dare not thank thee when our dear ones are born out of this world, and are clothed with immortality, yet we thank thee that the eyes of our faith can follow them still to that land where all tears are wiped from every eye, and the only change is from glory to glory.

We thank thee for the joy and satisfaction which we have attained to in our knowledge of thee, that we are sure of thy perfection, and need not fear anything which man can do unto us. Yea, we thank thee that, through red seas of peril, and over sandy wastes of temptation where no water is, the pious soul still goes before us, a light in the darkness, a pillar of cloud by day, to guide us to the rock that is higher than we, and to place our feet in a large place, where there are fulness of joy and pleasures for evermore.

O thou who art infinite in thy power, thy wisdom, and thy love, who art the God of the Christian, the heathen, and the Jew, blessing all mankind which thou hast made to inhabit the whole earth,—we thank thee

for all thy blessings, and pray that, mindful of our nature and thy nearness to us, we may learn to live to the full height of the faculties which thou hast given us, cultivating them with such large and generous education that we shall know the truth and it shall make us free, that we may distinguish between these ever-living commandments of thine and the traditions of men, that we may know what is right and follow it day by day and continually, that we may enlarge still more the affections that are in us, and travel in our pilgrimage from those near at hand to those needing our help far off, and so do good to all mankind, and that there may be in us such religious trust that all our daily work shall be one great act of service and as sacramental as our prayer. Thus may we be strengthened in the inner man, able at all times to acquit us as good soldiers in the warfare of life, to run and not be weary, to walk and never faint, and to pass from glory to glory till we are transfigured at last into the perfect image of thy spirit. Then, when thou hast finished thy work with us on earth, when the clods of the valley are sweet to our weary frame, may our soul go home to thee, and so may we spend eternity in the progressive welfare which thou appointest for thy children. And here on earth may the gleams of that future glory come upon us in our mortal life, clearing up the difficult paths and strengthening our heart when it is weak within us. So may thy kingdom come, and thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

## XVII

O thou Infinite Spirit, who occupiest all space, who guidest all motion, thyself unchanged, and art the life of all that lives, we flee unto thee, in whom we also

live and move and have our being, and would reverence thee with what is highest and holiest in our soul. We know that thou art not to be worshiped as though thou needest aught, or askedst the psalm of praise from our lips, or our heart's poor prayer. O Lord, the ground under our feet, and the seas which whelm it round, the air which holds them both, and the heavens sparkling with many a fire,—these are a whisper of the psalm of praise which creation sends forth to thee, and we know that thou askest no homage of bended knee, nor head bowed down, nor heart uplifted unto thee. But in our feebleness and our darkness, dependent on thee for all things, we lift up our eyes unto thee; as a little child to the father and mother who guide him by their hands, so do our eyes look up to thy countenance, O thou who art our Father and our Mother too, and bless thee for all thy gifts. We look to the infinity of thy perfection with awe-touched heart, and we adore the sublimity which we cannot comprehend. We bow down before thee, and would renew our sense of gratitude and quicken still more our certainty of trust, till we feel thee a presence close to our heart, and are so strong in the heavenly confidence that nothing earthly can disturb us or make us fear.

Father, we thank thee for this beautiful day which thou hast given us, for the glory which walks over our heads through the sky, for the pleasing alteration of light and shade, and all the gorgeous beauty wherewith thou clothest the summer in her strength, making her lovely to the eyes of men. Father, we thank thee that thou never failest to thy world, but sheddest dew on meadows newly mown and rainest down thine inspiration from the clouds of heaven on every

little grass and every mighty tree. Father, we thank thee that thou feedest and carest for all thy creatures, the moths that people the sunbeams, and the sparrows which fall not to the ground but by thy providence, protecting with thy hand the wandering birds of summer, and the wandering stars of heaven, holding them all in the golden leash of thy love, and blessing everything which thou hast made.

O thou Infinite One, we thank thee for thy precious providence, which is new every morning and fresh every evening and at noonday never fails. O thou whom no name can tell, whom all our thoughts cannot fully comprehend, we rejoice in all thy goodness; we thank thee that from seeming evil thou still educest good, and better thence again, and better still, in thine own infinite progression, leading forward and upward every creature which thou hast made.

We thank thee for our body, this handful of dust so curiously and wonderfully framed together. We bless thee for this sparkle of thy fire that we call our soul, which enchants the dust into thoughtful human life, and blesses us with so rich a gift. We thank thee for the varied powers thou hast given us here on earth. We bless thee for the far-reaching mind, which puts all things underneath our feet, rides on the winds and the waters, and tames the lightning into useful service. We thank thee for the use and the beauty which our thoughtful minds create, the grass of use for humble needs, the bread of beauty for loftier and more aspiring powers. We thank thee for this conscience, whereby face to face we commune with thine everlasting justice. We thank thee for the strength of will which can overpower the weakness of mortal flesh, face danger and endure hardship, and in all things acquit us like men.



O thou who art the King of Love, we thank thee for these genial affections which knit us to our kind. We bless thee for the love which sets the solitary in families, which makes one of twain, and thence many more, born from love, and growing up to kindred love again. We thank thee for the kindly sentiment which brings to pass the sweet societies of friendship, of kinsfolk and acquaintance, the joy of neighborhoods, the wide companionship of nations; and for that philanthropy, which, transcending the narrow bounds of individual life, of family, kinship, neighborhood, and nation, goes round the world, looking for the ignorant to teach them, for the needy to fill them with bread, and for the oppressed to set them free.

O thou Infinite One, who hast poured out treasures more golden yet, we thank thee for this religious sense, whereby we know thee, and, amid a world of things that perish, lay fast hold on thyself, who alone art steadfast, without beginning of days or end of years, for ever and for ever still the same. We thank thee that amid all the darkness of time, amid joys that deceive us and pleasures that cheat, amid the transgressions we commit, we can still lift up our hands to thee, and draw near thee with our heart, and thou blesest us still with more than a father's or a mother's never-ending love.

O Lord, we thank thee for these bodies, we bless thee for this overmastering soul, which only quits the flesh to dwell with thee in greater and more glorified magnificence for ever and for ever. We thank thee for those of past times or our own day who have brought to human consciousness the greatness of our nature, the nearness of thy presence, and the certainty of thy love. We bless thee for those whose words have



taught, whose living breath still teaches us wiser desires, simpler manners, grander truths, and loftier hopes, and chiefliest of all for those whose lives reveal to us so much that is human that we clap our hands and call it divine.

Our Father, we pray thee that we may use the blessings thou hast given us, and never once abuse them. We would keep our bodies enchanted still with handsome life, wisely would we cultivate the intellect which thou hast throned therein, and we would so live with conscience active and will so strong that we shall fix our eye on the right, and, amid all the distress and trouble, the good report and the evil, of our mortal life, steer straightway there, and bate no jot of human heart or hope. We pray thee that we may cultivate still more these kindly hearts of ours, and faithfully perform our duty to friend and acquaintance, to lover and beloved, to wife and child, to neighbor and nation, and to all mankind. May we feel our brotherhood to the whole human race, remembering that nought human is strange to our flesh but is kindred to our soul. Our Father, we pray thee that we may grow continually in true piety, bringing down everything which would unduly exalt itself, and lifting up what is lowly within us, till, though our outward man perish, yet our inward man shall be renewed day by day, and within us all shall be fair and beautiful to thee, and without us our daily lives useful, our whole consciousness blameless in thy sight. When new blessings are born to us in the body, when kindred souls are born out from the body to the kingdom of heaven, may we accept thy varying dispensation, which on the one hand gives and on the other takes away, and still triumphantly exclaim, It is thy hand, O God! Yea, so may

we live on earth that our daily toil shall renew a right spirit within us, that the temptations of business shall open the eye of our conscience that we may see justice and conform our will thereto, and our heart grow warmer and wider every day, and our confidence in thee so firm and absolute that it cannot change and will not be afraid. Father, help us to know thee as thou art, to understand thee as thou revealest thyself in this world that is about us, as thou hast spoken through mightiest men in other days, and still more to read that older as that newest Scripture ever written on our soul, that we may know thee in thine infinity, perfect in thy completeness, and complete in thy perfections. And whilst we know thee and love thee, may we overcome every fear of chance or change, every fear of disaster and storm and fate. Thus may thy kingdom come, and so thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

## XVIII

Our Father who art in heaven, and on earth, and everywhere, who dwellest not only in houses made with hands, but hast thy dwelling-place wherever a human heart lifts up a prayer to thee, we would flee unto thee, and, gathering up our spirits from the cares and the joys and the sorrows of life, would commune with thee for a moment, that so we may be made stronger for every duty and more beautiful in thy sight. May thy holy spirit rest upon us, and pray with us in our morning prayer, teaching us what things we should ask, and how to pray thee as we ought.

O thou who art everywhere, and fillest all the world, we thank thee for the freshness and beauty of this summer's day. We thank thee for the fair broad world wherein thou castest the lines of our earthly lot, for

the sky above us, burning all night with starry fire, for the splendor which gladdens the gates of morning and of evening, and the beauty which by day possesses the heavens with its serene presence, adorning the figure of every cloud. We thank thee for the ground under our feet, for the green luxuriance that is spread on all the hills and fields, for the rich harvest now yielding to the mower's scythe, to be swept into his crowded barns; and that other harvest, a wave-offering of bread for man, or which hangs abundant, growing or ripening, from many a tree all round the land. For these things we bless thee, remembering it is thou who fulfillest the wants of every living thing, opening thy hand and satisfying thy children with needed bread. We bless thee likewise for the beauty which unasked for springs up by the wayside, and broiders every human path, or which thou givest us the power to produce from out the cold, hard ground. We thank thee for the lilies and the roses which grow obedient to the gardener's thoughtful call, beautifying the fields and adorning many a house; and bless thee for thy loving-kindness which scatters wild roses along every rural path and about the margin of many a pond, and on the borders of every sluggish stream plants thy lilies, wherewith the enamored water, pausing in the beauty of its course, wantons, as it were, upon its handsome shores. O thou Infinite One, we thank thee that thou revealest thyself not only in books writ with human pens, but in all the stars above, in every blade of grass, in every fruit and flower which the gardener's thoughtful care produces from the ground, or in these, the roses and lilies which thy beneficent hand profusely scatters by many a pond and long-lingering stream.

We remember before thee our own lives, and thank

thee for these bodies so hopefully and wonderfully made, and these overmastering souls which enchant a handful of dust into living, thinking, and worshiping frames of matter, that are so animated with heavenly life. We bless thee for our daily work which feeds and clothes our bodies, and, though we ask it not, which instructs our understanding, and elevates our earnest conscience and heart and soul.

We remember before thee those that are near and dear to us, bone of our bone, and flesh of our flesh, whose very presence is a joy, and whose recollection is a blessing to our heart. O Lord, we remember before thee those whose flesh the grave hides from our eyes, but who are still life of our life, soul of our soul, those who have ceased from their labors and have gone home to thy more intimate presence, rejoicing, and advancing from glory to glory.

We remember before thee the trials thou givest us, and the temptations, often too strong for us to bear, and we pray thee that we may rouse up every noblest faculty in us, and so live that though our outward man should perish, the inward man may be renewed day by day, advancing towards the measure of the stature of a perfect man. O Father who art in heaven, O Mother who art near us always, we pray thee that there may be such religious faithfulness in us that not only the prayer of our Sunday morning shall be acceptable to thee, but all the work of our daily life be blameless and beautiful, holy as a sacrament, and a continual service unto thee. May there be such confidence in thee, such love of thee, and such fidelity towards thee, that we shall bring down every high thing which exalts itself, and make every member of our body and every faculty of our soul to serve thee in



our joy, and serve thee in our toil, and even in our sorrow and our sighing to serve thee not the less.

Our Father, who art of purer eyes than to behold iniquity, who blessest all of thy children, we remember before thee the great country in which thou hast cast the lines of our lot. We thank thee for the broad land thou hast given us, the mighty seas which are tributary to our thought; we bless thee for the vast multitude of people, and the great riches which our hands have won from the soil under our feet, from the waters that are round us, from the air that is over our head, and the mines which are hid in the bosom of the ground.

We remember before thee the days of our small things, and we thank thee for those Pilgrims who were moved with such greatness of piety that they refused to obey the wickedness of men. We thank thee that thou sustainedst them when they went from their own land, that thou wert with them in all their perils, and didst bring them out of deep waters and plantedst their feet here in a large place. We thank thee for the vine which here our fathers planted where they hewed the wilderness away; we bless thee that they tended it with their prayers, and watered it with their tears, and defended it also with their blood. We thank thee for those patriots who drew the sword in the day of extreme need, who put to flight the armies of the aliens, through whose wounds we are healed, and whose blows, smote by their right hand, have wrought for us our political redemption. Father, we thank thee for the women whose valiant eyes looked on and encouraged the hardier flesh of father, brother, husband, lover, or son.

And now, Lord, we bless thee for the fair institu-



tions which they founded here. We thank thee for what of freedom we enjoy in the State, for all of education which comes from wide-spread schools, for the instruction which the unbridled press furnishes for all. We thank thee for what of justice is made law, for all of right which has become the common custom of the people, for the happiness which has ensued to us all.

But, Lord, with shame and weeping, we lament the sins which thy people have committed against thee; that, with all the blessings of other days gathered in our arms, with all the strength of holy institutions and of great ideas enlarging our consciousness, we are still a people so proud and so wicked, who tread thy law underneath unholy feet. Father, we mourn that we have trodden the needy down to the ground, that we have broken the poor to fragments and ground them to the dust, and on the day of the nation's jubilee we mourn that the hands of millions of men are chained together, and their minds are fettered by ignorance. Yea, Lord, we take shame and confusion of face to ourselves that we suffer this monstrous sin to linger in the midst of us, making the nation's face gather blackness in its walk on earth. We mourn that our rulers are base, and the prayer of the people has become an abomination before thee, because of our wickedness and the oppression with which we have tortured the weakest of men. We will not ask thee to save us in our sins, to free us from the consequence of wrong, while we fold the evil in our mistaken arms, but we pray thee that we may be afflicted in our basket and store, that our great men may be vanity, and our governors a lie, till we repent of our wickedness and put away the evil from the midst of us.

O thou Infinite One, who hast given us strength pro-  
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portioned to our need, we pray that we may use the faculties thou hast given us to overcome the evil that lies before us in our path. May our minds devise the right way, our conscience point to us the justice which we should follow, and our hands work out our own redemption, even as thou commandest in every bone of our body and every faculty of our soul. So may we serve our nation better even than our fathers, the patriots or the Pilgrims, being faithful to the light of our day and generation, and walking whither thou wouldst have us to go. So may light come forth, and beauty and holiness cover the whole land, and peace and joy and righteousness be the possession of us all. Thus may thy kingdom come, and thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

## XIX

Our Father, who art in heaven, and on earth, we thank thee that in houses made with hands, and everywhere, thou revealest thyself to thy children, and we flee unto thee with our psalm of thanksgiving and our words of prayer, to bless thee for all that thou givest, and to quicken our souls in heavenly aspiration, that while thou drawest near unto us we may draw near unto thee, and in thee live and move and have our being. May the words of our mouths and the meditations of our hearts be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, our Strength and our Redeemer.

We thank thee for all the blessings thou givest us, for the ground beneath our feet, and the heavens over our head, for the sun which gently parts the morning clouds, and from his golden urn pours down the handsome day all round our northern land, and for the million eyes of heaven which all night look down upon

a slumbering world, full of thine own wisdom, and radiating thy love, which never slumbers and doth not sleep. We thank thee that thy spirit, which animates nature with its overflowing currents, fills also the heart and soul of man.

We thank thee for all the good which thou doest to us, for thy loving-kindness and thy tender mercy, which are over all thy works. We thank thee that thou takest care of oxen, and hast thine own thought for every great and every little thing which thine hands have made. We bless thee that we can both lay us down and sleep in safety, and when we wake that we are still with thee. We thank thee for thine infinite knowledge and thy power, wherewith thou createdst the all of things, foreseeing the end before the beginning yet was, and making all things work together for the good of all and each. We thank thee that we know that thou holdest the universe like a violet plant in thine hand, warmest it into life with thy breath, and inspirest it with thine own beauty, and blessest it with thyself. We thank thee that thou watchest over the course of human affairs, and bringest good out of evil, light out of darkness, and continually ledest forward thy children, step by step, from the low state wherein thou wert pleased to create mankind, to higher and higher heights of nobleness, as thou developest thy children to youth, to manhood, yea, to the measure of the stature of a complete and perfect man. We thank thee that thou hast nowhere left thyself without a witness, but everywhere makest revelations of thyself, where day unto day uttereth speech of thee, and night unto night showeth knowledge; yea, where there is no other voice nor language, thou, Lord, speakest in thine infinite wisdom and thy boundless love. We thank thee

for the presence of thy holy spirit everywhere, that thou persuasively knockest at every closed heart, and into open souls comest like the sweetness of morning, spreading there the delight of truth and piety, and loving-kindness and tender mercy too.

We thank thee that while we are sure of thy protecting care, thy causal providence, which foresees all things, we can bear the sorrows of this world, and do its duties, and endure its manifold and heavy cross. We thank thee that when distress comes upon us, and our mortal schemes vanish into thin air, we know there is something solid which we can lay hold of, and not be frustrated in our hopes. Yea, we thank thee that when death breaks asunder the slender thread of life whereon our family jewels are strung, and the precious stones of our affection fall from our arms or neck, we know thou takest them and elsewhere givest them a heavenly setting, wherein they shine before the light of thy presence as morning stars, brightening and brightening to more perfect glory, as they are transfigured by thine own almighty power.

We thank thee for all the truth which the stream of time has brought to us from many a land and every age. We thank thee for the noble examples of human nature which thou hast raised up, that in times of darkness there are wise men, in times of doubt there are firm men, and in every peril there stand up heroes of the soul to teach us feeble men our duty, and to lead all of thy children to trust in thee. Father, we thank thee that the seed of righteousness is never lost, but through many a deluge is carried safe, to make the wilderness to bloom and blossom with beauty ever fragrant and ever new, and the desert bear corn for men and sustain the souls of the feeble when they faint.



We thank thee for that noblest ornament and fairest revelation of the nature of man whom thou didst once send on the earth to seek and to save that which was lost. We thank thee that he withstood the sin and iniquity of his time, that he was the friend of publicans and sinners, that he broke the yoke of the oppressor and let the oppressed go free. We thank thee that he respected not the position of men, but was a friend to all the friendless, and the blessing of those ready to perish fell on his head. Father, we thank thee that he lifted up that which was fallen down, and bound that which was bruised, and was a father of the fatherless, and the Saviour of us all. Yea, Lord, we thank thee for his temptations and his agonies, for his trials and his bloody cross, and for all his perils so manfully borne, and the crown of human homage and divine reverence which thou didst set on his head, defiled once by a crown of thorns. And while we thank thee for these things, O Lord, we pray that the same human nature may be active in our heart, and a like heroism bear fruit in our daily lives.

Father, we thank thee for every good institution of the Church which has brought life and loving-kindness unto men. We thank thee for the great saints and martyrs whose names are household words in the world's mouth, and also for those unnumbered and unnamed, who with common talents have done great service for mankind, whose holy life thou hast blessed for all the world. We remember these before thee, and thank thee for the prayers, and the toils, the tears, the blood, and the manly and womanly endeavor, whereby the wilderness has been made to blossom as the rose, and the great victories of humankind have been achieved for us.



O thou who art our Father, and our Mother not the less, we remember these things, and we pour out our hearts in psalm of gratitude and ascending prayer of thanksgiving unto thee. We remember our own lives, the lines of our lot cast in this pleasant land, and we pray thee that we may faithfully do every duty which the age demands of us. Inheriting so much from times past, quickened by the inspiration of great men, and, still more, feeling thee a presence not to be put by, ever near to our heart,—we pray thee that there may be such religiousness of soul within us that we shall make every day a Lord's day, and all our work a great sacrament of communion with thy spirit. We pray thee that we may lay aside every weight, and forsake the sins which do most easily beset us, and run the race that is before us, pressing forward to the glorious prize which thou appointest for thy children. So may thy kingdom come, and thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

## XX

O thou Infinite Perfection, who art the soul of all things that are, we would lift up our spirits and gather up our hearts, and feel thy presence, and have thee as an abiding light in our tabernacle. We would thank thee for all the blessings thou givest us, and thy precious providence whereby we live. We know that thou needest no prayer of ours to stir thee to do us good, but in the midst of things changing and passing away, our heart and our soul cry out for thee, the ever living and true God. In the moment of our adoration, while we worship thee by our prayer, may we so strengthen ourselves that we shall serve thee all our lives, by a daily work which is full of obedience to thee and trust in thy perfection.

We thank thee for the world of matter whereon we live, wherewith our hands are occupied, and whereby our bodies are builded up and filled with food and furnished with all things needful to enjoy. We thank thee for the calmness of night, which folds thy children in her arms, and rockest them into peaceful sleep, and when we wake we thank thee that we are still with thee. We bless thee for the heavens over our head, arched with loveliness, and starred with beauty, speaking ever in the poetry of nature the psalm of life which the spheres chant before thee to every listening soul.

We thank thee for this greater and nobler world of spirit wherein we live, whereof we are, whereby we are strengthened, upheld, and blessed. We thank thee for the wondrous powers which thou hast given to man, that thou hast created him for so great an estate, that thou hast enriched him with such noble faculties of mind and conscience and heart and soul, capable of such continual increase of growth and income of inspiration from thyself. We thank thee for the wise mind, for the just conscience, for the loving heart, and the soul which knows thee as thou art, and enters into communion with thy spirit, rejoicing in its blessing from day to day.

We thank thee for noble men whom thou hast raised up in all time, for the great minds who bring thy truth to human consciousness, and thereby make mankind free. We thank thee for good men who do justly, and love mercy, and walk humbly with thee, visiting the fatherless and the widows in their affliction, and keeping themselves unspotted from the world, which they feed and bless with occasional charity and ever continuous toil and thought. O Lord, we thank thee for those who love thee with all their understanding

and their heart, and, loving thee thus, love also their neighbors as themselves; who overtake those that wander from the way of truth, who lift up the fallen, who are eyes to the blind, and feet to the lame, and strength and salvation to such as are ready to perish.

We thank thee that while we are brothers and sisters to each other, thou art Father and Mother to us all, and when earthly parents forsake and let us fall, when our own kinsfolk and acquaintance turn from us, thou wilt hold us up and in no wise let us fall.

We remember before thee our daily lives, the duties thou givest us to be done, and we pray thee that we may have manly and womanly strength to do whatsoever our duty requires, and to bear any cross that is laid upon us, how hard and grievous soever to be borne. We remember before thee the joys thou givest us, and we pray thee that while our own heart is filled with gratitude to thee for the blessings which our hands have wrought, or have fallen as an inheritance to our lot, we may run over with loving-kindness and tender mercy to our fellow-men.

O Lord, we remember the sorrows with which thou triest us, which make our eyes run down with tears, and we pray thee that there may be in us such serenity of trust in thy providence that every tear shall be changed to a far-prospecting glass, whereby distant glories shall be brought near, and things seemingly small shine out in their real grandeur before our eyes, and ourselves be comforted even by the affliction thou givest us, and grow strong by what else would weaken heart and soul.

We pray thee that there may be in us a pure and blameless piety, which, knowing thee in thine infinite perfection, loves thee with all our understanding and

our heart and our soul; and so loving thee, may we keep every law which thou writest on our material bodies, or in our spiritual soul, and live blameless and beautiful in thy sight, doing the duties of time, yet conscious of eternity, and so in a little time fulfilling a great time, and journeying ever forward and upward, till we are transformed into that perfect image of thyself, when thy truth is our thought, thy justice is our will, and thy love is the law of our daily life, as we go from glory to glory. So lead us forward through the varying good and ill of this life, and, at last, when we have finished our course on earth, and the clods of the valley are sweet to our perishing flesh, then wilt thou clothe us with the garments of immortality, and take us to thyself, ever in an ascending march to go higher and higher in those glories which eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor the heart of man conceived of in its highest golden dream. So may thy kingdom come, and thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

## XXI

Our Father who art in heaven, and on earth, and everywhere, we know that thou rememberest us, for we stand for ever before thy throne, and thou needest not the psalm of our lips nor our heart's ascending prayer to stir thy love towards us, but sometimes in our weakness do we dream that thou needest to be entreated, and so ask thee to draw nigh to us; but we know it is for us to draw near to thee, who art ever present with us, about us, and above us and within. O thou Perpetual Presence, we thank thee for thy loving-kindness and tender mercy, in the consciousness of which we would spread out in our memory the recol-

lection of our daily lives, the wrong deeds we do, the joys we delight in, the duties that are hard to be done, and the high hopes that kindle heaven within our heart ; and while we muse on these things for a moment, we would so adore and worship thee in our prayer that we may serve thee always in our daily life.

Father, we thank thee for the material world which thou hast placed all around us, underneath, and overhead. We thank thee for the sun, which across the wintry land pours out the beauty of the golden day, checkering the year with exceeding loveliness. We thank thee for the night, visited with troops of stars, and for the moon which walks in brightness from the east to the west, gladdening the eyes of wakeful men. We thank thee for the wondrous use there is in this material world, which feeds and shelters with house and raiment our mortal flesh, which is kind with medicines to our various ailments, and furnishes manifold tools for our toil and thought.

We thank thee for the greater world of spirit, whereof thou hast created us in thine own image and likeness, vested with immortality, having here a foretaste of everlasting life. We thank thee for our body, so curiously and wonderfully made, and for the spirit, which far transcends this vast material world. We thank thee for the mind, which loves use and beauty and truth ; for this conscience which would know right, and the overmastering will which would do it all our days. We bless thee for the affections, which join us to some particular bright star, or tie us to some pleasant nook of earth ; which ally us with the animals about us, and most tenderly do find their home in father and mother, in lover and beloved, husband and wife, parent and child, and all the sweet companionships



which gladden our earthly loving heart. We bless thee for the feeling infinite, the religious soul which thou hast planted in us, of higher kinship than the mind, the conscience, or the earthly affections; yea, we thank thee for this soul, which without searching can find out thee, and hold communion with thee at our own sweet will, receiving blessed inspiration from thy presence, which is not to be put by.

We thank thee for the relation which thou hast established between that world of matter which is without us and this world of spirit which is within; and we thank thee that while material nature furnishes food and shelter, instruments and healing to our mortal flesh, it likewise furnishes far higher things to mind and conscience, and to heart and soul. Yea, we bless thee that thou hast made all things work together for good; that while we are striving with prayer and toil for daily bread, thou givest us also the bread of life, and feedest us with spirit's food, and so nursest us upward till we grow to the measure of the stature of a complete and perfect man. O Lord, what is man that thou art mindful of him? Thou hast created him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honor and immortality, and hast put all things underneath his feet.

We remember our daily lives before thee, the wrong things which we have done, and the unholy thoughts and evil emotions which we have not only suffered in our hearts but cherished there. We pray thee that thou wilt chasten us for these things, and we may suffer and smart therefor till we turn from every wrong, and with new life efface the scars of ancient wickedness wherewith we have stained and deformed our consciousness.

We remember before thee the special blessings thou hast given, and while we would not forget thy hand, which feedeth us for ever and for ever, we would let our hearts, when filled with gratitude to thee, run over with their loving-kindness and tender mercy to mankind, till our hands also are filled with good deeds, whereby we hold communion with our brother-men.

We remember the stern sorrows which thou givest us, the cup of bitterness oftentimes pressed to our lips, the trials that await us in our business and perplex our understanding; we remember the sorrows which stain our eyes with tears when thou changest the countenance of our dear ones, and lover and friends are put far from us, and our acquaintance into darkness. O Father in heaven, O Mother on earth and in heaven too, we thank thee that we know that it is unto brightness, and not darkness, that thou ferriest our acquaintance over, carrying our dear ones into thine own kingdom of heaven. We thank thee for the spirits of just men made perfect already, and for those whom, in infinite progression, thou ledest forward from the stain of earthly sin to that purity and perfection which the eye hath not seen, nor the ear heard, nor our human hearts but poorly, dimly felt.

Father, we thank thee that while earthly things perish and pass away, and we know not what a day shall bring forth, we are sure of thine infinite power, wisdom, justice, and love, and when our mortal decays and passes down to the sides of the pit, and the clods of the valley are sweet to our perishing frame, we thank thee that we still feel thy presence as not to be put by, and the calm still voice of thy spirit pleads with us, teaching of duty and assuring us of its infinite reward.

O Father in heaven, we will not ask thee to work a miracle and draw nigh to us, thou who art ever living in our life and moving in our motion, and yet transcending time and space. But we pray thee that there be such action of our noblest part that we shall think truth, that we shall know right and will it all our days, that we shall love things given us to love, and grow in our affection stronger and stronger to our brother men, closer and closer knit; and may there be such action of our soul that we shall know thee as thou art, and live with a perpetual income of thy spirit to ourselves, even in our sleep thou giving to thy beloved, and we receiving from our Father and our Mother, whose warmth shall make us warm, whose life is our living. Day by day may we pass from the glory of a good beginning to the greater glory of a noble end, and when at last thou hast served thyself with our mortal bodies, may we lay them in the dust, whence these garments of the soul were taken first, and clothed with immortality, fly upwards, onwards unto thee. So may thy kingdom come, and thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

## XXII

O thou Infinite One, who art a perpetual presence above us, and about us, and within, we would draw near unto thee, who art not far from any one of us, and with a consciousness of thy presence would remember before thee all the blessings thou hast given us, the duties which we are to do, the crosses which must be borne, the joys we delight in, and the sorrows which afflict us; remembering these things, we would so worship thee for a moment that we may serve thee all the days of our lives. Our Father who art in heaven,

whither shall we flee from thy presence, whither shall we go from thy spirit? If we take the wings of the morning and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there shall thy hand lead us, and thy right hand shall hold us up. We thank thee for thy loving-kindness and thy tender mercy, which are over all thy ways, beneath which we can lay us down and sleep in safety, and when we awake we are still with thee.

We thank thee for the noble nature thou hast given us, for its vast powers to know truth and beauty, to find out the eternal right, to love one another with the strength of our affections, and to know thee, who art our Father and our Mother, and to cleave unto thee with an absolute trust, which knows no turning nor falling away.

O Lord, we remember before thee thine own presence in the world of matter, and in the consciousness of our own soul. We thank thee that thou speakest in this Old Testament of the world of nature, and in this New Testament of man's spirit makest yet more glorious revelations of thyself; and while there proclaiming thy power, thy law, thy wisdom, here in our hearts thou tellest ever of thy justice and thy love, thine infinite perfection which thou art. We thank thee for the great revelations thou hast made through the human sense and human soul in times past. We bless thee for the great men and women whom thou hast gifted so liberally with genius that they have become great philosophers, poets, and teachers of morality to mankind, in whose soul thine own image has been mirrored down and reflected back to men. We thank thee for the prophets and apostles who, in all lands, and in every age, through the inspiration thou didst normally put on them, have been a guiding and shining light unto their brothers.



We thank thee that not only unto great men hast thou revealed thyself, but out of the mouth of babes and sucklings hast thou perfected thy praise, the little teaching the great, and the few instructing the many. We thank thee for the millions of common men and women, their names to mankind all unknown, who with great faithfulness of soul have looked upwards and found thee, and with the daily beauty of their lives have revealed thy loving-kindness and thy tender mercy to the world of men.

Above all others, do we thank thee for that great and noble man who in days of darkness and extreme peril thou raisedst up, and through his genius didst inspire with so much of truth, and justice, and philanthropy, and faith in thee. We thank thee for the words of truth which he spoke, for the sentiments of noble piety and philanthropy which came out, not only in his speech, but in the daily works of his handsome life; and we bless thee that his words and the memory of his life have come down to us to kindle our hope, to stir our aspirations, and to strengthen our faith in man.

Father, we thank thee not only for all these things which are behind us, but that still to the human soul thou impartest thyself, giving truth to all who use their minds aright, revealing justice to every one, warming each faithful heart with love, and revealing thyself to whoso with honest purpose looks up and seeks after thee. We thank thee for all truth which we have learned of thee, for every emotion of pious gratitude and holy trust which has sprung up within our heart; and if we have achieved any elevation of character and done any good deeds in our lives, we thank thee, who givest to us all in our nature so liberally, and demandest of



us only the duties which our strength is equal to, and which raise us to greater and greater powers of strength by the doing thereof.

We remember before thee our own daily lives, thanking thee for the reward which comes as the result of our toil. We bless thee for the friends near and dear, by whatsoever name they are called, still bone of our bone, and flesh of our flesh, or spirit of our soul. We thank thee that in our sorrows thou art an ever-present help, not far from us, but exceeding near, and the thought of thee not only confirms us for our duty, but refines us till we are able to bear the exceeding sorrows oft laid on us. We bless thee for the glorious hope which spreads out before us, for the consciousness of everlasting life which comes as the innermost fact of our inward soul. We thank thee that in a world where things deceive our expectations, we are sure of thee, and certain of thy loving-kindness and thy tender mercy, and the infinite heaven which spreads out before us.

We pray thee that there may be in us such knowledge of thee, such love and trust in thee, that all our days we shall serve thee with blameless and earnest work. May we do the duties thou givest to be done, and bear any crosses laid upon us, in such manly and womanly sort, that by toil and suffering we shall grow wiser and better every day. Help us to distinguish between the commandments of erring men and the everlasting commandments of thy law, which thy spirit writes on the world of matter and publishes in this world of spirit. Day by day may we grow wiser and juster, stronger in our righteous will, more loving in our affections, while our emotions towards thee become continually more and more beautiful, and blessed still the more.

We remember thee before all men, our brothers everywhere, and pray thee that by our truth and our lives we may do something to lift the cloud of darkness which blinds men's eyes, and to strike off the fetters which chain the mind or which manacle the limbs. So by our life may we serve thee, who art not to be worshiped as though thou neededst anything, and here on earth may we pass from glory to glory, till, when thou hast finished thy work with us below, thou layest our bodies in the dust, and clothest us with immortality, and, arrayed in that wedding garment, takest us home to thyself, to pass from the glory of the earthly to the greater glory of the heavenly, and enter into those joys which eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor the heart of man can fully comprehend. So may thy kingdom come, and thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

## XXIII

O thou Infinite Spirit, who possessest the darkness of the night, and fillest the chambers of the day with thy glorious presence, we would draw near unto thee, and worship thee with the homage of grateful hearts, thanking thee for the favors for which thou askest not our gratitude, and communing with thy spirit face to face. In our darkness and our feebleness we turn ourselves unto thee, seeking to feel thee nearer and more intimately in our souls, and so to worship in our morning prayer that thy sunlight shall shine upon our heads, and in the light thereof we shall journey all our days, serving thee with a perfect service and a manly trust.

O thou who givest us all things so richly to enjoy, we thank thee for the world wherein thou hast cast

the lines of our lot. We bless thee for the night, where the moon walks in beauty, and star unto star proclaims thy loving-kindness and thy tender mercy, wherewith thou fillest up the world of space, and embracest not less the all of time. We thank thee for the handsome day, which this great star pours down from heaven, bringing the touch of spring to our cold northern lands, and waking the newly-ventured birds to their earliest vernal song. Father, we thank thee for all the beauty of the year, for the wondrous world which is under our feet, and above our heads, and round us on every side.

We thank thee for these bodies of ours, builded up from material things, so curiously and so wonderfully made; we thank thee for the power which thou givest them, and all their various weapons for toil and for defense. We thank thee for the noble soul thou hast enthroned herein, this divine spark, enchanting with its life this handful of material dust. We thank thee that thou hast created us in thine own image, and hast given us the power over these material things, over the earth under our feet, and the elements that are above us and about us on every hand.

We thank thee for the large mind, rejoicing in use, in beauty, and in science not the less. We thank thee for the power thou givest us from this material world to build up our bodies, strong and handsome temples, wherein thy spirit dwells in the human form, incarnating itself in so many millions and millions of thy daughters and thy sons. We thank thee for these senses, through which the soul looks out upon the world, and at these various windows takes knowledge in, and learns so much of thy works, and has communion with thine infinite joy in the world of matter which thou hast made.

We thank thee for this conscience, with its power to know right, and its will to do right, and we bless thee that only thine own unchanging higher law of right can satisfy it, yearning for the first good, first perfect, and first fair. We thank thee that through this faculty we hold communion with thine everlasting righteousness, and can live by thy commandment, which is exceeding broad, and hath neither variable-ness nor the shadow of a turn.

We thank thee for these affections, whereby we love those about us, and knit many tender ties which join us each to each, and all to one another. We thank thee for the love which joins those that are of the same nation or community, for the kindred blood which throbs in mutual hearts. We bless thee for the affection which makes the lover and his beloved to rejoice together, giving welfare to the bridegroom and the bride, to wife and husband. We thank thee for all the sweet felicities which come from the relation of friend to friend, and parent to child, for the many joys which cluster round our heart, and shine like morning light within the humblest or the proudest home.

We thank thee that in addition to all these things thou givest us power to know thee, to trust thee, and to love thee, with a faith that knows no change, save from glory to glory, as it brightens into the perfect day of piety and its serenest joy. We thank thee that amidst a world of things which are changing, we are sure of thine infinite loving-kindness and thy tender mercy, and even in darkness we can trust thee, knowing that thy fatherly and motherly arm is about us, leading us from strength to strength, ready to uphold us when we totter, and to lift us up when we

fall down. O thou Infinite One, we know no words to tell thee the deep emotions of our heart, the joys of our piety, and the holy trust we place in thee; and thou needest no words, nor askest thou the prayer or psalm of thanksgiving from our heart, for thou art behind us and before, and above us and below, and about us and within and understandest every thought before our words express it in the ear.

We remember before thee the duties thou givest us to do, and we pray thee that with earnest faithfulness we may do them all. May we bear any cross thou layest on us which must be borne, with reverent patience, growing stronger from every affliction wherewith thou triest us. When those near and dear are severed from our side, and the shadow of death falls on the empty place of our friend, we would remember that other world, where all tears are wiped from every eye, and thy children pass from the greater glory to the greatest, as they are led in infinite progression by thy hand.

We remember the joys thou givest us, and while we taste them, we pray that our hearts may be filled with bounty towards all, and we may do good according to the measure of the strength which thou givest us.

We remember our daily lives, and pray thee that by bearing what must be borne, and doing what thou givest us to do, we may build ourselves up to higher and higher heights of human excellence. May we grow wiser and more just, be filled with more loving-kindness to our brother men, and have a heartier and a holier love and trust in thee. May no success in this world's affairs ever harden our heart, but make us more noble and more generous, and may the world's



sorrow and sickness and grief and disappointment and loss only rouse up the better soul that is in us, till we triumph over affliction, and have gained the victory over death. Thus in our souls may there be such a bud of piety as shall open and bloom out into the fragrant flower of morality in our daily lives, and while it thus blossoms broad in use, may it bear seed within itself which shall last for ever and for ever. So finish thou thy work with us here below, and when it is done and ended, wilt thou take us to thyself, to be with thee for ever, and so to be transfigured into higher and higher likenesses of thy spirit, and pass from glory to glory for ever and ever. So may thy kingdom come, and thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

## XXIV

O thou Infinite One, we flee unto thee, and for a moment would be penetrated with the thought of thy presence, and so worship thee in the uplifting of our hearts that we may serve thee with our hands all the days of our mortal lives.

We thank thee for thy loving-kindness and thy tender mercy, which are new every morning and fresh every evening, and which fail not at noonday. We thank thee for the world that is about us, and above us, and beneath us, full of thy presence in every star of heaven and every flower of earth. We bless thee for the other world which ourselves are, whereto this sphere of matter is but outward resting-place and environment, and we thank thee that our souls are likewise the temple of thy spirit, and thou it is who givest us life and breath and all things richly to enjoy. We thank thee that thou hast created us from perfect love,

and watchest over us with such causal providence that thou makest all things work together for good, and wilt lose no child of perdition from thy mighty human flock, but wilt lead thy children by the hand, and those who cannot walk thou wilt bear in thine arms, and bring them all at last to never-ending bliss. O thou who art perfect love, we thank thee for thyself, and, sure of thine infinite loving-kindness and thy tender mercy, we know that we cannot fail, and having thee, all else needful are we sure of beside.

We thank thee for the glorious nature which thou hast given us, that thou hast blessed us with such large faculties, to know what is useful and beautiful and true, to understand what is just and right before thine eyes; and with this affection whereby we love each other, and are joined by manifold tender ties to those who are dear to us, however far remote in time and space. We thank thee for this great and overmastering power whereby we know thee and commune with thee, thy spirit inspiring our spirit, and thy providence upholding us when we totter, and uplifting us when we fall. Father, we thank thee for all these things, and our words know not how to praise thee as our hearts so gladly would, but we know that thou needest no words from our heart, no psalm from our lips, for thou understandest us, knowing the words of our mouth before they are conceived in our heart.

We thank thee for all manner of blessings which thou givest us. We bless thee for the things needful to the body, for our health and our strength, our bread by day, our nightly sleep, and the work which our hands find to do, whereby our bodies are clothed with raiment and our mouths are satisfied with bread. We thank thee for the instruction which comes to mind

and to conscience from our daily toil. We bless thee for those who are near to our heart, whether by our side or far removed, or separated even by the gates of death. We thank thee for the ascended spirits that were once with us on earth, lifting their eyes upon the sun, taking sweet counsel with us, and walking to thine house in company. We bless thee for all good and noble men and women, who from time to time come up in thy providence, to teach nations the way in which they should walk, and to call many from wickedness to the ways of justice, which lead to such blessedness on earth and beyond the world. We thank thee for ages past, for the childhood of mankind, and for any words of simplicity and truth which have come down to us from ancient days. We thank thee for the primal virtues which shine aloft as stars, and not less for the charities which heal and soothe and bless, and are scattered at man's living feet like flowers. We bless thee for the great truths which have come down to us on their sounding way through the ages, encouraging and strengthening men. We thank thee for poets and prophets and mighty men of thought and of piety, who spoke as they were moved by thine all-awakening spirit, and brought truth to mankind; and we thank thee that in our own day, not less, thy spirit still works with the children of men, O thou, who art the head, and dost every joint supply, and art always present in the world of matter and the world of man.

We thank thee for all these things, and we pray thee that we may strengthen ourselves mightily with thy spirit in our inner man. May we turn off our eyes from loving evil things, and withhold our hand from every unclean and ungodly work. May we build ourselves

up to the measure of a perfect man, growing continually to a higher image and likeness whereafter thou hast created us. May there be in us such love of thee, such faith in thee, and such obedience towards thee, that we shall keep every law thou hast written on our bodies or in our souls. Thus may we learn thy truth, and may it set us free alike from the darkness of old times and the error of our own days. May we learn what is right and do thy will, with all the strength that is in us, and while we ask thee to love us, may we love our brothers as we love ourselves, and grow constantly in the practice of every religious duty, and the doing of every manly work. Thus may thy kingdom come, and thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

## XXV

O thou who art everywhere, we would feel thy presence at our heart, and lift up our spirit unto thee, seeking to hold communion with thee, and be strengthened for duties, for sorrows, and for joys. For a moment we would remember in thy presence the lives that we lead, the works thou givest us to do, our shortcomings, or any success that is in us; and while we muse on these things may the fire of devotion burn within our heart and so stir us that from our moment of worship we may learn to serve thee all the days of our lives.

O thou, who art our Father and our Mother, we thank thee for thy loving-kindness and thy tender mercy, which are over all thy works. We thank thee that thou causest thy sun to shine on the evil and on the good, and sendest thy rain on the just and on the unjust. We bless thee that with fatherly providence,



with motherly love, thou carest for the enlightened people of the earth, and not less for those whom savage ignorance hath held blinded so long. We thank thee that thou lovest thy saint, and also every sinner, who is also a child of thine, and wilt suffer no son of perdition in thy great family, whom thou blessest with thyself.

We thank thee for the special providence which is over everything which thou hast created, and wherein thou residest with all thine infinite perfections. We bless thee for the rain which to-day thou sheddest out of the sweet heavens, to warm the long-chilled bosom of the ground, to swell the buds on every tree, and to awaken the flowers of prophecy on all our northern hills and in our valleys, which are full of the promise of spring. We bless thee that, while thou givest us the earth under our feet and the heavens above our head, both in that which is beneath, and that which is above, and not less, O Lord, in that which is within us, thou thyself residest for ever, and manifestest thyself to all the sons and daughters of men. We thank thee that in the midst of human darkness thou art an ever-glorious light, shining for ever in thy beauty. We thank thee that out of seeming evil thou still educest good, and better thence again, in thine own infinite progression, and so leadeest thy children ever upwards, and forward forever. We thank thee that even the wrath of man is made to serve thee, and the remainder of wrath thou dost restrain, making all things work together at last for good. We thank thee that thou carest for us all, that in our day of joy we know it is thou who fillest our cup, by giving us the faculties which make it run over at the brim. We thank thee that thou art with us in our days of hardship and of



calamity, that when our own heart cries out against us, thou art greater than our heart, and, understanding all things, blessest us in secret ways; and when we are cast down, and go stooping and feeble, with hungering eyes and a failing heart, that thou still art with us, and ledest us from strength to strength, and blessest us continually.

We remember before thee the daily works wherein we are engaged, the perplexities of our business, abroad or at home, and we pray that we may have such strength of faithfulness to thee that the dark shall appear light to us, and the crooked shall become straight, and the way of duty so plain before our face that we cannot err therein.

We remember the sorrows with which we are tried, the grievous disappointments that are laid upon us; yea, we remember that thou takest from us our lover and acquaintance those with whom we took sweet counsel, and walked to thy house in company. We remember before thee their immortality and our own, and we thank thee for the kingdom of heaven which arches over us, and sheds down its sweet influence from on high to encourage and to draw us up. And in days of sorrow we pray thee that we may have a quickening sense of this spiritual world whereto our faces are set, which is the appointed end of our earthly pilgrimage.

Father, we remember our own souls before thee; we know how often we have been forgetful of the duty which thou demanded of us, that we have often cherished unworthy feelings, and have not felt that love to our brother men which we should have felt, or which we have asked of thee. Yea, we remember that we have stained our hands by doing wrong things, and defiled the integrity of our own consciousness, and we pray

thee that we may smart for every offense which we commit against thee, till, greatly ashamed of our folly and our meanness, we pass off from the unholy ways which are evil and lead to evil, and turn to those which are pleasantness and lead to eternal blessedness beyond the grave. Father, we thank thee for any suffering which comes upon us for wrong doings, knowing that thereby thou recallest us from the evil of our ways, and would save our souls from suffering yet worse.

And we pray thee that this religious faculty may be so strongly active within us that we shall never fear thee, but a perfect love may cast out fear, and we know thee as thou art in thine infinite perfection, the Father and Mother of our soul in our every hour of need, which is our every hour of life; and may we have such love for thee, such faith towards thee, and live such a life in thee, that within us all shall be blameless and beautiful, every faculty performing its several and appointed work, and all our outward lives shall be as harmonious as the stars in their courses, and full of continual use to our brother men.

O thou who needest not to be entreated, we do not ask of thee new talents, for thou hast given what thou sawest fit; nor do we entreat thee to do for us what thou hast given us power to do; but, conscious of thy presence, feeling the great gifts which thou hast bestowed upon us, and the perpetual income of thy spirit, we would use every faculty which thou hast given for its appropriate work, and so pass from childhood to manhood, from glory to glory, till thou, finishing thy work with us here, shall take us to thyself, to pass from the greater glory to the greatest, by a continual transfiguration of ourselves to thine image and thy likeness. So may thy kingdom come, and thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

## XXVI

O thou who art everywhere, and needest not to be entreated, nor askest the bending of our knees, nor the prayer of our lips, nor our heart's psalm unto thee, we would draw near to thee for a moment, who art always near unto us. We would remember the blessings thou givest us, the duties thou demandest, the sorrows we are tried withal, or the offenses which we commit; and while we muse on these things, may the fire of gratitude and devotion be kindled on our altar, and our souls flame up towards thee, like incense from the altars of the just. From the moment of our communion with thee may we gather such strength that we shall worship thee always by a constant service from day to day.

Our Father who art in heaven, and on earth, and everywhere, we thank thee for the world of matter under our feet, and over our head, and about us on every side. We thank thee for the night which hung the curtains of darkness about us, whereunder we could lay us down and sleep in safety, and that when we awoke we were still with thee. We thank thee for the moon which walked in beauty, and checkered the darkness with her comely light, and we bless thee for the sun which from his golden urn pours day across the world, warming and blessing everything with his sweet angelic touch. We thank thee, O Lord, for the bread we eat, for the garments we put on, for the houses which hold us, for the sleep which all night slides into our bones, bringing strength to the weary, and health to the sick; and we bless thee for the day full of toil and opportunities for manly endeavor.

We thank thee for the vast gifts which thou hast

bestowed upon us, for these bodies so curiously and wonderfully made, as a temple for a spirit more wondrous and far more curiously made to dwell therein awhile, enchanting the dust into wise and human life. We thank thee for the ever-questioning mind, which hungers for use and truth and beauty, wherewith thou feedest us from age to age. We bless thee for this large conscience, which seeks for justice, wherewith thou dost enlighten our eyes and quicken what is innermost within us. We thank thee for these self-denying affections, which reach out unto friends and kinsfolk, unto lover and beloved, parent and child, to countrymen, yea, which spread out their arms to those that are needy everywhere. We thank thee for this religious faculty, which through the darkness looks up to thee and is filled with thy light, and we bless thee that in our hour of sorrow it brings to us exceeding tranquillity and hope and strength. We thank thee for the dear and tender joys which are born in our innermost of consciousness, which dwell there and fill the whole temple of our inner life with that presence which cannot be put by, which is a blessing to us by darkness and by day. We thank thee, Father in heaven, for all the good which has come from these great talents thou hast blessed us withal. We thank thee that in every age and every land thou givest open vision of thyself to thy children, and in the things that are seen mirrorest thine own image, O thou whom the mortal eye cannot see, but whom our heart enfolds within itself, which is blessed by thy touch. We thank thee for great philosophers and prophets and poets, mighty men and women, whom thou hast blessed with large genius, who in many an age have gathered truth and justice, and taught love, and lived blameless piety; we



thank thee for the revelations of manhood they have made to us, and the revelations of thine own spirit which through them have shone upon our heart. And for the greatest of them all, as we fondly dream, we thank thee,—for him who taught so much of truth, and lived so much of piety in his soul, and blameless benevolence in his outward life; we bless thee for his words of soberness, for his life of sacrifice and of duty, and all the gladness and joy which therefrom has come to the sons and daughters of men. We thank thee not less for the millions of unremembered souls of men and women, who in their common callings of earth were faithful to the light which shone upon them, howsoever dim; and we bless thee that by their stripes we are healed, and we also have entered into their labors, and rejoice in the heritage which their toil has won and bequeathed to us.

Remembering all these things, we would pour out our psalm of gratitude to thee, kindling a reverence and love within our heart. We remember before thee the duties thou givest us to do, and, howsoever hard, pray thee that we may stir ourselves to be equal to our task. We would not forget the sorrows that are laid upon us, the disappointments, the bereavements, and afflictions, which the mortal eye of man beholds, and those dearer and worser which only thy sight sees in our heart, knowing its own bitterness; and we pray thee that we may strengthen ourselves mightily for these things, and be made wiser and better within by the sorrows which we endure, which lie patent to the world, or are hid in the recesses of our secret soul.

Of earthly things we know not how to pray thee as we ought, seeing as through a glass darkly, and not knowing whether poverty or riches, whether disaster



or triumph, shall serve thy purpose best and make us noble men. But whatsoever of these things we have, whether thou gildest our pathway with the sun of serenity, or thunderest before our face, holding the blackness of darkness over us, yet give us the noble mind which loves the truth, the conscience which though it trembles as it lowly lies looks ever to the right, the affection which makes us spend and be spent for the good of others,— give us these things, and crown these virtues with sweet loving-kindness and faith in thee which need not be ashamed.

O thou who art our Father and our Mother, may we know thee as thou art, as thou revealest thyself in the clear depths of our soul, and knowing thee, may we love thee with all our understanding and our heart, with our strength and our soul; and making it all blameless in our inner man, may our outward life be useful also, full of beauty, and welcome in thy sight. So here on earth may we have a foretaste of thine heaven, and fly upwards towards thee, transfiguring ourselves by constant growth into thine image, till, finishing thy work with us on earth, thou layest our bodies in the grave, and to thine own home takest our spirits, to be with thee for ever and for ever. So may thy kingdom come, and thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven, for thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory for ever and ever.

## XXVII

O thou who art present everywhere, we know that we need not ask thee to remember us, for thou hast us in thy holy care and keeping by day and by darkness, and art the presence at our fireside and about our path, watching over our rising up and our lying down,

and acquainted with all our ways. In our weakness we flee unto thee, seeking to draw near thee, to know thee as thou art, and worship thee with what is highest and best within our soul. Conscious of thy presence about us and within, and mindful of thine eye which is ever upon us, we would remember the things which make us glad, or fill us with sadness; we would think over the good deeds which beautify our soul, and the ill things which are the deformity of our spirit; and while we muse on these things, may the fire of devotion so burn in our heart that from the momentary worship of our prayer we may learn to serve thee in our daily life through all our years. May the meditation of our heart bring us nearer unto thee, and the words of our mouth carry us up and on in the great journey of our mortal life.

Father, we thank thee for this material world above us, and about us, and underneath, wherein thou hast cast the lines of our earthly lot in exceeding pleasant places. We thank thee for the stars which all night in their serene beauty speak of thee, where there is no voice nor language, yet the speech of whose silence is felt by longing, hungering, and impatient souls. We thank thee for the sun, which pours out the golden day to beautify the sky, and to bring new growth of plants, and life of beast and bird, and many a creeping thing upon the ground. We thank thee for the presence of spring with us, for this angel of growth, who weeks ago put the green oracle of the prophetic grass by every watercourse, rippling its psalm of life before the sight of men, and who now has cast his handsome garment on our plains, and whose breath swells the buds in many a vale and on many a hill, and draws the birds with their sweet music once more to our northern

land. We thank thee for the seed which the hopeful farmer casts already into the genial furrows of the ground, looking to thee, who art the God of seed-time, for the harvest's appointed weeks.

We thank thee for the human world which ourselves are; we bless thee for the large nature with which thou hast endowed us, giving us the victory over the ground and the air, making every element to serve us, and the great sun by day to measure out our time, and distant stars by night to keep watch over our place, letting us know where 'tis we stand upon thy whirling, many-peopled globe. We thank thee for the large measure of gifts, the many talents wherewith thou enrichest this soul of man, which thou createdst nobler than the beasts that perish, and giftedst with such power immense, and such immortal hope.

We thank thee for the joys of our life, our daily bread which imports strength into our bodies, the nightly sleep which brings tranquillity, recruiting us from toil past, and strengthening us for duties that spread out before.

We thank thee for the mortal friends that are around us, for the dear ones who are bone of our bone or spirit of our spirit, whom we put our arms about and fold to our heart, a gladsome sacrament to our bosom, a serene blessedness to our earthly mortal soul. We remember the new ties which join us to the world, little Messiahs born into human arms, and we thank thee for the tender ties newly knit, which join the lover and his beloved, the bridegroom and the bride, and all those sweet felicities wherefor the heart, marrying itself to another, before thee pours out its natural psalm of grateful joy. We thank thee for these dear affections, whereby the earth blossoms like a rose, and

far-reaching philanthropies go out to bless the distant world, counting mankind our kith and kin. We bless thee for this deep religious faculty which thou hast given us, which through the darkness of earth looks upward to thine exceeding light, the star whose sparkle never dims, but shines through every night adown upon the human soul.

We thank thee for the duties thou givest us to do, our general toil by fire-side and street-side, on land or sea, or wheresoever thou sendest us to run for the prize of thine own high calling. Yea, we bless thee for trials which are not too severe for us, and for the burdens which thou layest on our manly or womanly shoulders, that for others' sake and for our own we may bear them nobly and well.

O Lord, in the light of thy countenance, how many wrong things spring up to our consciousness, and we must needs stain our prayer with some tear of penitence for an error committed, an evil deed, or some unholy emotion which we have kept within our soul. We will not ask thee to forgive us and remove from us the consequence of wrong; we know that so doing thou wouldst rob us of our right; — but we pray thee that we may learn to forgive ourselves, and with new resolution dry up every tear of penitence, and fill those footsteps which we have made in ancient error with new and manly, womanly life, bearing us farther forward in our human march.

We remember before thee the sorrows with which thou triest us, how often we stoop us at the bitter waters and fill our mouths with sadness, and if we dare not thank thee for these things, if we know not how to pray thee about them as we ought, we yet thank thee that we are sure that in all these things thou

meanest us good, and out of these seeming evils still producest good, making all things work together for the highest advantage of thine every child, with whom thou hast no son of perdition and not a single castaway. We thank thee for that other, that transcendent world, beyond this globe of matter and this sphere of present human consciousness. We thank thee for that home whereinto thou gatherest the spirits of just men made perfect, and for our dear ones who have gone thither before us, and bless thee that they are still not less near because they are transfigured with immortal glory, and have passed on in the road ourselves must also tread. We thank thee for not only the hope, but the certain consciousness of immortality that is within our soul, giving us light in our darkness, hope when else we should despair; and when we are bowed down and go stooping and feeble, with failing eyes and hungering heart, we thank thee that we can lift up our countenance towards that other world, and be filled with joy and gladness of heart.

Our Father who art in heaven, we thank thee for thyself,— the materiality of material things, the spirituality of our spirit, the movingest thing in motion, the livingest of life, the all-transcending in what is transcendent. O thou who art our Father and our Mother too, we thank thee for thy providence, which is over all thy works in this world, material, or human, or transcendent; yea, for the infinite love which thou bearest to everything which thou once hast borne.

We pray thee that we may know thee as thou art, in all thine infinite perfection of power and wisdom and justice and holiness and love, and knowing, may have within us that perfect love of thee which casts out every fear. May there be in our soul that warming



strength of piety which shall give us the victory in our trial, making us strong for public or for unseen crosses that are laid upon our shoulders, and winging us with such strength that out of sorrow we shall fly towards thee, going through the valley of weeping, and coming off with not a stain upon our wings and no tear-drop in our eye. May there be in us such love of thee that we shall love every law which thou hast writ on sense or soul, and keep it in our daily lives, inward and outward, till all within us be beautiful, till our outward conduct be blameless, and we make every day thy day, all work sacrament, and our time a long communion, with use to our brothers, and with calmness, trust, and love to thee. So on earth may thy kingdom come, and thy will be done here now as it is in heaven, for thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory for ever and ever.

## XXVIII

O thou Perpetual Presence, in whom we live and move and have our being, we would draw near unto thee once more in our mortal consciousness, adoring and thanking and worshiping thee, who art of our lives our most living thing, the cause and providence of all that be. We would remember before thee the blessings thou givest to be enjoyed, the duties to be done, the crosses we bear, and the temptations we encounter; we would spread all these things out before our eyes, and look at them in the light of thy conscious presence, and while we muse thereon may the fire of devotion so burn in our hearts that from our moment of worship we may gather a continual service of thee for all time to come. So may the meditations of our hearts, and the words even of our mouths, draw us

nearer unto thee, and strengthen us for duty and hope and sorrow and delight.

Our Father, who art always with us, we thank thee for the material world thou hast given us, this great foodful ground underneath our feet, this wide over-arching heaven above our heads, and for the greater and lesser lights thou hast placed therein; we bless thee for the moon which measures out the night, walking in brightness her continuous round, and for the sun that pours out the happy and the blessed day all round thy many-peopled world. We thank thee for the green grass, springing in its fair prophecy, for the oracular buds that are promising glorious things in weeks to come. We thank thee for the power of vegetative and animative life which thou hast planted in this world of matter, which comes up this handsome growth of plant and tree, this noble life of fish, insect, reptile, bird, beast, and every living thing.

We thank thee for the human world whereof thou hast created us; we bless thee for the great spiritual talents wherewith thou hast endowed man, the crown of thy visible creation on the earth. We thank thee for our mind and our conscience and our heart, and all the manifold faculties which thou hast given us, whereby we put material things underneath our feet, making the ground to serve our seasons, and the sun to keep watch and distribute warmth about our garden and our farm, whereby we turn the vegetative and animative powers of earth to instruments for our bodily welfare, and our mind's and heart's continual growth.

We thank thee for the work thou givest us to do on earth, in our various callings, wide-spread in the many-peopled town, or in some lonely spot hid in the

green world which compasses the town. We thank thee for all these things that our hands find to do, by fireside and field-side, in school, or shop, or house, or ship, or mart, or wheresoever thou summonest us in the manifold vocations of our mortal life.

We bless thee for the joys which we gather from our toil, for the bread which strengthens our live bodies, for the garments and houses which shield us from the world without, for all the things useful, and the things of beauty, both whereof are a joy to our spirits.

We thank thee for the dear ones thou givest us on earth, called by many a tender name of friend, acquaintance, relative, lover or beloved, wife or husband, parent or child, and all these sweet societies of loving and congenial souls. We thank thee for the joy which we take in these our dear ones, whilst they are near us on earth, and when in the course of thy providence it pleases thee to change their countenance and send them away, we thank thee still for that transcendent world whereinto thou continually gatherest those that are lost in time, and are only found in eternity, and if reft from our arms are taken to thine, O thou Infinite Father, and Infinite Mother too. We thank thee that for all sorrows there is balm and relief, that this world which arches over our head, invisible to mortal eye, is yet but a step from us, and our dear ones, looking their last on earth, are born anew into thy kingdom of heaven, and enter into glory and joy which the eye has not seen, nor the ear heard, nor our hungering hearts ever fully dreamed of in our highest thought.

We thank thee, O Lord, for thyself, thou Transcendent World, who embracest this material earth and

this human spirit, putting thine arms around all, breathing thereon with thy spirit, and quickening all things into vegetative, animative, or human life. We thank thee that whilst here on earth, not knowing what a day may bring forth, nor certain of our mortal life for a moment, we are yet sure of thine almighty power, thine all-knowing wisdom, and thy love which knows no change, but shines on the least and the greatest, on thy saint and on thy sinner too. We thank thee for the perfect providence wherewith thou governest the world of material, of growing, or of living things; we bless thee that thine eye rests on each in all its history, that there is no son of perdition in all thy family, and that thou understandest our temptations, that thou knewest before we were born whatsoever should befall us, and that in thy fatherly loving-kindness and thy motherly tender mercy thou hast provided a balm for every wound, a comfort for every grief. We thank thee that when our kinsfolk and acquaintance pass from earth, howsoever they make shipwreck here, they land in thy kingdom of heaven, entering there in thine eternal providence, their eternal welfare made certain of before the earth began to be.

While we thank thee for these things, who needest not our thanks, while our hearts, overburdened with their gratitude, lift up our prayerful psalm unto thee, and we remember our daily duties, and the glorious destination thou hast appointed for us, we pray thee that with great and noble lives we may serve thee all the days of our mortal stay on earth. May there be in us such a pious knowledge of thee, such reverence for thee, and such trust in thee, that we shall keep every law thou hast writ on our body or in our soul, and grow wiser and better, passing from the glory of



a good beginning to the glory of a noble ending, as we are led forward by thy spirit, co-working with our own. Day by day, may we proclaim our religion by our faithful industry, doing what should be done, bearing what must be borne, and at all times acquitting us like men. So may thy kingdom come, and thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

## XXIX

O thou Infinite Perfection, who fillest the world with thyself, and art not far from any one of us, we flee unto thee, and for a moment would draw near thee, that by the inspiration of our prayer we may know how not only to worship thee in our psalm and the adoration of our heart, but to serve thee with our work in all the daily toil of our mortal lives. We know that thou needest neither our psalm of thanksgiving, nor our aspiring prayer, but our heart and our flesh cry out for thee, the Living God, and for a moment we would join ourselves to thee, and warm and freshen our spirit in the sunlight of thy countenance, and come away clean and strengthened and made whole.

Our Father, we thank thee for the material world in which thou hast placed us. We thank thee for the return of spring, bringing back the robin and the swallow from their wide wanderings, wherein thy providence is their constant guard, watching over and blessing these songsters of the sky. We thank thee for the buds swelling on every bough, and the grass whose healthy greenness marks the approaching summer, and the flowers, those prophets of better days that are to come. We bless thee for the air we breathe, for the light whereby we walk on the earth, for the darkness that folded us in its arms when we



lay down thereunder, and that when we awoke we were still with thee. We thank thee for the bread which we feed upon, for the shelter which our hands have woven or have builded up, to fend us from annoying elements. We thank thee for all the means of use and of beauty which thou givest us in the ground and the air and the heavens, in things that move, that grow, that live. We thank thee that thou makest these all to wait on us, having kindness for our flesh, and a lesson also for our thinking soul.

We thank thee for the human world, whereof thou hast made us in thine own image and likeness. We thank thee for the great faculties which thou hast given us, of body and of mind, of conscience and of heart and soul. We thank thee for the noble destination which therein thou shadowest forth, for the great wants which thou makest in our spiritual nature, for the unbounded appetite thou givest us for the true and the beautiful, the right and the just, for the love and welfare of our brother men, and the vast and overshadowing hope which thou givest us towards thee. We thank thee for this great nature thou hast given, with its hungerings and thirstings for ultimate welfare, for duty now and blessedness to come.

We thank thee for all the various conditions of mortal life. We bless thee for the little children who are of thy kingdom, and whom thou yet sufferest to come unto us; we thank thee for these perpetual prophets of thine, whose coming foretells that progressive kingdom of righteousness which is ever at our doors, waiting to be revealed; we thank thee for the joy which these little buds of promise give to many a father's and mother's heart. We thank thee for the power of youth; we bless thee for its green prom-

ise, its glad foretelling, and its abundant hope, and its eye that looks ever upwards and ever on. We thank thee for the strength of manhood and of womanhood, into whose hands thou committest the ark of the family, the community, the nation, and the world. We thank thee for the strength of the full-grown body, for the vigor of the mature, expanded, and progressive mind, and all the vast ability which thou treasurest up in these earthen vessels of our bodies, holding for a moment the immortal soul thou confidest to their care. We bless thee for the old age which crowns man's head with silver honors, the fruit of long and experienced life, and enriches his heart with the wisdom which babyhood knew not, which youth could not comprehend, and only long-continued manhood or womanhood could mature at length and make perfect. O Lord, we thank thee that thou hast made us thus wondrously and curiously, and bindest together the ages of infancy and youth and manhood and old age, by the sweet tie of family and of social love.

We thank thee for that other, the transcendent world, which is the home of the souls thou hast disenchanted of this dusty flesh and taken to thyself, where the eye may not see, nor the ear hear, nor our own hungering and thirsting heart fully understand, all the mysterious glory which thou preparest for thy daughters and thy sons. We thank thee for the good men who have gone before us thither. We bless thee that the little ones whom thou sufferest to come unto us, when they depart from us, thou takest to this other world and watchest over and blessest there. We thank thee that thereinto thou gatherest those who pass out of earth, in their babyhood, their youth, their manhood, their old age, and settest the crown of immor-

tality on the baby's or the old man's brow, and blestest all of thy children with thyself.

O thou, who art almighty power, all-present spirit, who art all-knowing wisdom, and all-righteous justice, we thank thee for thyself, that thou art in this world of matter and this world of man, and that transcendent immortal world. Yea, we bless thee that thou art the substance of things material, the motion of all that moves, the spirituality of what is spirit, the life of all that lives, and while thou occupiest the world of matter and the world of man, yet transcendest even our transcendence, and hast thine arms around this dusty world, this spiritual sphere, and the souls of good men made perfect. We thank thee for the motherly care wherewith thou watchest over every living thing which thou hast created, guiding the swallow and the robin in their far-wandering but not neglected flight, for without thee not a sparrow falls to the ground, and thou overrulest the seeming accident even for the sparrow's good.

Father, we remember before thee our daily lives, thanking thee for our joy, and praying thee that there may be in us such love of thee, such reverence and holy trust, that we shall use the world of matter as thou meanest us to use it all. In our daily work, may we keep our hands clean, and an undefiled heart; may we do justly, and love mercy, and walk humbly with thee. When our cup runs over with gladness, may we grow bountiful to all that need our wealth, using our strength for the weakness of other men, to lift up those that are fallen, to be eyes to the blind, and feet to the lame, and to search out the cause which we know not. We remember our sorrows before thee, and when our mortal hearts are afflicted, when sick-

ness lays waste our strength, when riches flee off from our grasp, when our dear ones in their infancy, their youth, their manhood or old age, are lifted away from the seeing of our eyes — may our hearts follow them to that transcendent world, and come back laden with the joy into which they have already entered. Our Father, may we so know thee as all-wise and all-just as to never fear thee, but perfect love shall cast out fear, and a continual springtime of faith bud and leaf and blossom and grow and bear fruit unto eternal righteousness. So may we pass from glory to glory, transfiguring ourselves into an ever higher and more glorious likeness of thyself, and here on earth enter into thy kingdom and taste its joy, its gladness and its peace. So may thy kingdom come, and thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

## XXX

O thou Infinite Presence, who livest and movest and hast thy being in all things that are above us, and around us, and underneath, for a moment we would feel thee at our heart, and remember that it is in thee we also live and move and have our being. Conscious of thy presence, we would look on our daily lives, that the murmur of our business, and the roar of the streets, and the jar of the noisy world, may mingle in the prayer of our aspiration, and our devout soul may change it all into a psalm of gratitude and a hymn of ever-ascending prayer. May the meditations of our hearts and the words that issue thence draw us nearer unto thee, who art always above us and about us and within.

We bless thee for the material world, wherewith thou environest us beneath and about and overhead.



We thank thee for the night, where thy moon walks in brightness, pouring out her beauty all around, with a star or two beside her; and we bless thee for the sun, who curiously prepares the chambers of the east with his beauty, and then pours out the golden day upon the waiting and expectant ground. We thank thee for the new life which comes tingling in the boughs of every great or little tree, which is green in the new-ascended grass, and transfigures itself in the flowers to greater brightness than Solomon ever put on. We thank thee for the seed which the farmer has cradled in the ground, or which thence lifts up its happy face of multitudinous prophecy, telling us of harvests that are to come. We thank thee also for the garment of prophecy with which thou girdest the forests and adornest every tree all round our northern lands. We bless thee for the fresh life which teems in the waters that are about us, and in the little brooks which run among the hills, which warbles in the branches of the trees, and hums with new-born insects throughout the peopled land. O Lord, we thank thee for a day so sweet and fair as this, when the trees lift up their hands in a psalm of gratitude to thee, and every little flower that opens its cup and every wandering bird seem filled by thy spirit, and grateful to thee. We thank thee for all thine handwritings of revelation on the walls of the world, on the heavens above us and the ground beneath, and all the testimonies recorded there of thy presence, thy power, thy justice, and thy love.

• We thank thee not less for that perpetual spring-time with which thou visitest the human soul. We bless thee for the sun of righteousness which never sets, nor allows any night there, but, with healing in



his beams, shakes down perennial day on eyes that open, and on hearts that, longing, lift them up to thee. We thank thee for the great truths which shine to us, the lesser light like the moon in the darkness of the night, and those great lights which pour out a continuous and never-ending day about us where'er we turn our weary mortal feet. We thank thee for the generous emotions which spring up anew in every generation of mankind, for the justice that faints not nor is weary, for the truth which never fails, for that philanthropy which goes out and brings the wanderer home, which lifts up the fallen and heals the sick, is eyes to the blind and feet to the lame; yea, we thank thee for that piety which inspired thy sons in many a distant age, in every peopled land, and we bless thee that it springs anew in our heart, drawing us unto thee, and giving us a multitudinous prophecy of glories that are yet to come, while it sheds peace along the pathway where we turn our weary mortal feet.

We remember before thee the various business of our lives, thanking thee for the bread we eat, the raiment we put on, the houses which shelter us, the tools that occupy our hands, and all this wonderful array of material things whereby thou marriest the immortal soul to this globe of lands about us and underneath. We thank thee for the process of our work, blessing thee for all which industry teaches to our intelligent hand, to our thoughtful mind, to our conscience, which would accord it with thy law, to our hearts, which would love each other, and to our soul, which gains not only daily bread for the body, but bread of life for itself, yea, angel's bread, wherewith thou administertest the industrial sacrament to our lips in our daily toil.

We remember before thee our various duties and temptations on the earth. In the time of our youthful passion, we pray thee that conscience may light its fire within our heart, to shed its light along our path, that we stumble not, nor fall into the snare of the destroyer; and in the more dangerous hour when ambition tempts the man, we pray thee that with greatness of religion we may bid this enemy also stand behind us, and wait till we bind his hands and make him bear our burdens and grind the mill whereby we achieve greater glories for ourselves. We pray thee that when we are weak and poor and foolish, we may remember the source of all strength and all riches and all wisdom; and when we grow strong and rich, wise and good, may we never forget our duty to the poor, the weak, the foolish and the wicked man, but, remembering that mercy is more than sacrifice, may we love others as we love ourselves, and forgive them as we ask thy blessing on us in our trespasses and our sins.

We remember before thee those that are near and dear to us, joined by many a pleasant tie, seen by the eyes, or felt only in the soul which trembles across distances, and with the electric bond of love joins the distant as the near. We thank thee for all that we love, and who in turn love us, and, mid the noisy world, we bless thee for the quiet satisfaction which comes to peaceful loving souls.

Father, we remember not less those who are of us, if with us no more, and while we dare not thank thee that the mortal has faded from our sight, we thank thee that we know that when friend and lover are put from us, they go not into darkness but into unspeakable light, born out of the world of time to live for ever in thy glorious eternity.

Our Father, we remember before thee our whole country, thanking thee for the many blessings thou hast given us, for the great multitude of its people, for the abundance of its riches, for its industry which fails not, and its mind which grows ever the more intelligent. We thank thee for great men who in times past bore to this land the seed of promise, planted it in the wilderness, watched over it, defending with their tears, and enriching with their blood; yea, who drew swords in its manly defense. We thank thee for these men, for these great, noble, valiant souls, who in our day of pilgrimage and of revolution were faithful to mankind's sorest need, and wrought for us so great deliverance.

And now, Lord, we remember before thee one, two years since felled by the assassin's coward hand, himself not less noble than the noblest, and by the stripes of our iniquity which were laid on him, disabled alike from public duty and private joy, him whom the waters, cradling, rock, while he seeks in other lands the quiet and the health this cannot offer. We thank thee for his valiant soul which remembered its bravery when others thought but of discretion, and that he bore a man's testimony in the midst of an unmanly crowd of mean men, and deserved greatly of his own generation, and ages that are to come. We know that we need not ask thy blessing on him, but in our hearts we would bear his memory exceeding precious.<sup>3</sup>

Father, we pray thee that in every emergency of our lives we may be faithful to the duty which the day demands, and with reverent spirits acquit us like men, doing what should be done, bearing what must be borne, and so growing greater from our toil and our sufferings, till we transfigure ourselves into noble im-

ages of humanity, which are blameless within and beautiful without, and acceptable to thy spirit. So may thy kingdom come, and thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven; for thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory, the dominion and honor, for ever and ever.

## XXXI

O thou Infinite Perfection, who art everywhere present, by day and night, we would flee unto thee, and for a moment take thee to our consciousness, in whom we live and move and have our being, as thou also livest and movest and hast thy being in us. Conscious of our dependence upon thee, we would remember our joys and our sorrows, praying thee that from our moment of communion and of worship we may get new strength to serve thee all the days of our lives. O thou Infinite Mother, who art the parent of our bodies and our souls, we know that thou hast us always in thy charge and care, that thou cradlest the world beneath thine eye, which never slumbers nor sleeps, and for a moment we would be conscious of thy presence with us, that thereby we may enlighten what is dark, and raise what is low, and purify what is troubled, and confirm every virtue that is weak within us, till, blameless and beautiful, complete and perfect, we can present ourselves before thee.

Father in heaven and on earth, we thank thee for the world of matter thou hast given us, about us, underneath us, and above our heads. We thank thee for the genial year, whose sweet breath is now diffused abroad o'er all our northern land. We thank thee for this great inorganic and organic mass of things whereon we live. We bless thee for the world of



vegetative growth which comes creeping, creeping everywhere, spreading over the shoulders of the land, and running beneath the waters of the sea. We thank thee for the flowers which adorn the green grass, and which hang their open petals in wondrous beauty yet from many a lingering tree. We thank thee for these lesser and these greater prophets who proclaim in their oracles the various gospel of the year, foretelling the harvest of grass for the cattle, and of bread for man, and satisfaction for every living thing. We thank thee for the rain thou sheddest down from heaven, abundant in its season, and the genial heat thou minglest with the air and earth, changing these seeming dead organic things to vegetative growth. We bless thee for the animated world of living things that feed upon the ground, that wing the air with their melodious beauty, or that sail unseen the depths of the sea. We thank thee for all this varied flock of speaking and of silent things which thou hast breathed upon with thy breath of life. We thank thee that from day to day thou spreadest a table for every great and every little thing, that thou feedest the fowls of heaven, and carest for the beasts of the earth, the cattle and the creeping things, taking care of oxen, and having thine eye on all the many millions of creatures which thou hidest in the waters of the sea, where thou feedest them with thy bounty, housing, and clothing, and healing all.

We thank thee for this great human world which thou hast superadded to this earth, and air, and sea. We thank thee for the mighty capacities which thou hast given us for thought and toil, for use, and beauty's sweeter use, for duty and all the manifold works of mortal time. We bless thee for the eye of



conscience which thy sun of righteousness doth so irradiate with healing in his beams, and we thank thee for this blessed power of affection which makes twain one, and thence educes many forth, and joins all in bonds of gladness and love. We thank thee for this uplifted and uplifting soul of ours, whereby we know thee, our Father and our Mother, and have serene delight in thy continual presence and thy love.

Father, we thank thee for that transcendent world near to the earth of matter and the soul of man, wherein thou dwellest, thou and the blessed spirits thou enclosest, as the sea her multitudinous and her fruitful waves.

Father, we thank thee for thine own self, for thy fatherly loving-kindness, for thy motherly tender mercy, which are over all thy works, breaking their bread to the humbler things that are beneath us, and feeding us not less with bread from heaven, even the spiritual food which is our soul's dear sustenance. We thank thee that when we slumber and when we wake, when we think of thee, and when our minds are on the cares of earth, or the joys of friendship, thou hast us equally in thy care, brooding over us with a mother's love, sheltering us with all the perfections of thine infinite being. Yea, we thank thee that when, through the darkness that lies about us, or the grosser darkness of perverted will within, we wander from thy ways, thy motherly love forsakes us not, but thou reachest out thine arm and bringest back the wanderer, rounding home at last, a wiser and a better man, that he has sinned, and suffered, and so returned.

We remember before thee our inward and our outward lives, and pray thee that, on this material world, and of this human, and surrounded so by thee, we may

live great, blameless, noble lives. May there be in us that soul of piety which so regardest thine infinite power, wisdom, justice, and love, that we shall scorn to disobey the law which thou hast writ on flesh or soul, but keep all which thou commandest, and serve thee by a life that is continually useful, beautiful, and acceptable with thee. In this springtime of the year, half summer now, may there be a kindred springtime in our soul, and the lesser and the greater prophets thereof, may they hang out their pleasing oracles, the gospel which promises a noble harvest of virtue in days to come. May we have such piety within, transfiguring itself to such morality without, that we shall bear every cross which should be borne, do each duty which must be done, and at all times bravely acquit us like noble men. Thus may we grow to the measure of the stature of a complete and perfect man, passing from glory to glory, till thou finishest thy work on earth through our hands, and welcomest us to thine own kingdom of heaven, to advance for ever and ever, from glory to glory, from joy to joy, as we are led by thee. So may thy kingdom come, and thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

## XXXII

O thou who art always near to us, we in our consciousness would for a moment draw near unto thee, and, feeling thee at our heart, would remember the circumstances of our daily lives, the joys we delight in, the sorrows we bear, the sins wherewith we transgress against thee, the grave, and solemn, and joyous duties thou givest us to do.

O thou who givest to mankind liberally, we thank thee for the world of matter wherein thou hast placed

us, for the heavens above our head, for the stars that burn in perennial splendor, though the misty exhalations of the earth may hide them from our sight. We bless thee for the sun which above the clouds pours down the light, and creates a world of beauty, ere long to be opened to our mortal sense. We thank thee for this great foodful ground underneath our feet, now garmented with such loveliness, and adorned with the manifold radiance of thy loving-kindness and thy tender mercy. We thank thee for the grass everywhere growing for the cattle, and for the bread which the farmer's thoughtful toil wins by thy providence from out the fertile ground. We thank thee for the seed he has cast into its furrows, and the blade piercing the earth with its oracle of promise, foretelling the weeks of harvest which are sure to follow in their appointed time. We thank thee that in the cold rain from the skies, thou sheddest down the unseen causes of harvests both of use and of beauty which are yet to come.

We thank thee for the love with which thou givest thy benediction to everything which thou hast made. Thou pasturest thy clouds on every ocean field, thou feedest thy mountains from the breast of heaven, thou blessest the flowers on a thousand hills, thou suppliest the young lions when they hunger from lack of meat, thou clothest the lily with beauty more than queenly, and through all these outward things that perish thou speakest of thine infinite providence, which watches over every sparrow that falls, and holds in thy hand the wandering orbs of heaven.

We thank thee also for this great, glorious human nature which thou hast blessed us with. We thank thee for the body, so curiously and wonderfully made, fitted for all the various purposes of human need; and

we thank thee for this spiritual part which thou hast breathed into this mortal.

We bless thee for this toilsome and far-reaching mind, which gives us dominion over the earth beneath our feet, and makes the winds and the waters serve us, which tames the lightning of heaven, and learns the time from the stars by night and the sun by day. We thank thee for that great world of artistic use and beauty, and of scientific truth, which the human mind has made to blossom from out this foodful ground and these starry heavens wherewith thou girdest us about.

We bless thee for the moral sense, hungering and thirsting after righteousness, and that thou fillest our conscience with thine own justice, enlightening our pathway with the lamp of right, shining with its ever unchanging beams, to light alike the way of thy commandments and of human toil upon the earth.

We thank thee for these dear affections, which set the solitary in families, and of twain make one, and thence bring many forth, peopling the world with infantile gladness, which grows up to manhood and to womanhood in all their various forms. We thank thee for that unselfish and self-forgetful love which toils for the needy, which is eyes for the blind, and feet for the lame, and is wisdom for the fool, and spreads civilization all round the world, giving freedom to the slave and light to those who have long sat in darkness.

We thank thee for this overmastering religious faculty, the flower of intellect and conscience and the affections, and we bless thee that by this we know thee instinctively, and have a joyous delight in thy presence, opening our flower, whereinto thou sheddest gentle dew, warming it with all thy fatherly and motherly love, blessing us from day to day, from age to age.



We thank thee for the great triumphs of the human race, that while thou createst us individually as little babies, and collectively as wild men, slowly but certainly thou ledest thy children from low beginnings, ever upward and ever forward, towards those glorious heights which our eyes have not seen nor our forefeeling hearts completely understood. We thank thee for the truth, the justice, the philanthropy and the piety, which elder ages have brought forth and sent down to us, to gladden our eyes and to delight our hearts. We thank thee for those great, noble souls whom thou createdst with genius and filledst with its normal inspiration, who have shed light along the human path in many a dark day of our human history, and in every savage land. And above all these do we thank thee for that noble brother of humanity, who, in his humble life, in a few years, revealed to us so much of justice, so much of love, and with such blameless piety looked up to thee, while he forgave his enemies, putting up a prayer for them. And not less, O Father, do we thank thee for the millions of men and women, who with common gifts and noble faithfulness have trod the way of life, doing their daily duties all unabashed by fear of men. We thank thee for what has been wrought out by these famous or these humble hands, which has come down to us.

O Lord, we thank thee for thyself, Father and Mother to the little child and the man full-grown. We thank thee that thou lovest thy savage and thy civilized, and putttest the arms of motherly kindness about thy saint and round thy sinner too. O thou who art infinite in power and in wisdom, we bless thee that we are sure not less of thine infinite justice and thy perfect love. Yea, we thank thee that out of these per-



fections thou hast made alike the world of matter and of man, providing a glorious destination for every living thing which thou broughtest forth.

We remember before thee our daily lives, and we pray thee that in us there may be such knowledge of thy true perfection, such a feeling of our nature's nobleness, that we shall love thee with all our understanding, with all our heart and soul. We remember the various toils thou givest us, the joys we rejoice in, the sins we have often committed, and we pray thee that there may be such strength of piety within us, that it shall bring all our powers to serve thee in a perfect concord of harmonious life. In youth may no sins of passion destroy or disturb the soul, but may we use our members for their most noble work; and in manhood's more dangerous hour may no ambition lead us astray from the true path of duty and of joy. Wherever thou castest the lines of our lot, there may we serve thee daily with a life which is a constant communion with thyself. So day by day may we transfigure ourselves into nobler images of thy spirit, walk ever in the light of thy countenance, and pass from the glory of a manly prayer to the grander glory of a manly life, upright before thee and downright before men, and so serve thee in the flesh till all our days are holy days, and every work, act, and thought becomes a sacrament as uplifting as our prayer. So may thy kingdom come, and thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

### XXXIII

O thou Infinite Presence, who occupiest all space and all time, with thy perfections, we flee unto thee, and would feel for a moment the consciousness of thee,

and in the light of thy countenance would we spread out our life before thee, and so pay thee worship in our prayer that we may give thee manly and womanly service all our days, with continual cleanness of hands and gladness of heart. We know that thou needest no prayer from our lips or our hearts, but in our feebleness and dependence upon thee, we love to join ourselves for a moment, in our silent or our spoken prayer, with thee, who art our Father and our Mother, that we may gird up our loins and strengthen our spirit before thee.

O Lord, who givest to mankind liberally, and upbraidest not, we thank thee for the blessings thou bestowest from day to day. We thank thee for this material world, now clad in its garment of northern beauty, for the great sun which all day pours down his light upon the waiting and the grateful world, and for the earth underneath our feet. We bless thee for the green luxuriance which fills up all the valleys and covers all the hills, and hangs in its leafy splendor from every tree. We bless thee for the grass, bread for the cattle, its harvest of use spread everywhere, and for the various beauty which here and there spangles all useful things which thine eye looks down upon. We thank thee for the grain which is the food of man, and for the green fruit hanging pendent on many a bough which waves in the summer wind, its wave-offering unto thee. We thank thee that all night long, when our eyes are closed, above our head there is another world of beauty, where star speaketh unto star, and though there be no voice nor language, yet thy great spirit therein watches alike over the sleeping and the wakeful world.

Father, we thank thee for this great human world

which thou hast created. We bless thee for the glorious nature which thou hast given us, above the material things and above the beasts who feed thereon, which thou hast made also subservient unto us. We thank thee for the vast talents, so various and so fair, which thou hast lodged in these earthen vessels of our bodies. We bless thee for our vast capacity for improvement in every noblest thing, and that thou hast so made the world that while we seek the daily bread for our body which perishes in the using, we gain also by thy sweet providence that bread of life which groweth not old, and strengthens our soul for ever and ever.

We thank thee for the joys thou givest us here on earth, for the blessing which comes as the result of our daily toil, which feeds our mouths, and clothes our bodies, and houses and heals us in the world where shelter and medicine are kind to our mortal flesh. We thank thee for the education which comes from the process of all honest work, the humblest and the highest. We bless thee for the moral sense, telling us of that star of right which shines for ever in thine heaven, and sheds down the light of thine unchanging law, even in the darkness of our folly and our sin. We bless thee for this great human heart by which we live, making us dear to kinsfolk and acquaintance, to friend and relation, joining the lover and beloved, wife and husband, child and parent, in sweet alliances of gentleness and love. Father, we thank thee for this soul of ours, which hungers and thirsts after thee, and will not be fed save with thy truth, thy justice, and thy love.

We bless thee for the glorious history which thou hast given to humankind; that from the wild babyhood

wherein thou createdst man at first, thou hast led us up thus far, through devious ways to us not understood, but known to be ordered by thee, tending to that grand destination which thou appointest for all mankind. We thank thee for the great prophets who have gone before us in every land and in every age, gifted with genius in their nature, and inspired from thee through the noble use of the talents thou gavest them. We thank thee for the truths they taught, for the justice they showed, for the love to men which was their faith and their daily life, and the piety wherein they walked and were strengthened and made glad. We bless thee for the ways of the world which were made smooth by the toil of these great men, and that we can walk serene on paths once slippery with their blood and now monumented with their memorial bones. O Lord, we thank thee for our noble brother who in many generations gone by brought so much of truth to darkling man, showed so much of justice, and lived so much of philanthropy to men and of piety to thee.

Our Father, while we thank thee for the material and the human world, we bless thee also for that divine world which transcends them both. We thank thee for that heaven, the abode of spirits disembodied from the earth, and we lift up our eyes towards those who have gone before us, our fathers, or our children, husband or wife, kinsfolk and friends, and we thank thee that we know that they are all safe with thee, thy fatherly arms around them, and thy motherly eye giving them thy blessing.

We thank thee for thyself, who fillest that world and also this globe of matter and this sphere of man with thy transcendent presence. We bless thee for thine almighty power, thine all-knowing wisdom, thine



all-righteous justice, and thine all-blessing love, which watches over and saves every son and daughter of mankind. In the midst of things which we do not understand, we bless thee that we are sure of thee, and have towards thee that perfect love which casts out every fear.

We pray thee that in our soul there may be such depth of piety and such serene and tranquil trust in thee, that in our period of passion we shall tame every lust that wars against the soul, making it our servant, not our master; and in manhood's more dangerous day may we tame likewise the power of ambition, and make that our servant, to run before us and prepare the way where our laborious justice, our truth-loving wisdom, our philanthropy and our morality, with generous feet, shall tread triumphant in their journey on. May we use this world of matter to build up the being that we are to a nobler stature of strength and of beauty; and the great powers which thou hast given us, of mind, of conscience, of heart, and of soul, may we educate and culture them till we attain the measure of the stature of a perfect man, and have passed from glory to glory, till thy truth is our thought, and thy justice our will, and thy loving-kindness is the feeling of our heart, and thine own holiness of integrity is our daily life. Thus may thy kingdom come, and thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

#### XXXIV

O thou Infinite Presence, who art everywhere, whom no name can describe, but who dwellest in houses made with hands, and fillest the heaven of heavens, which run over with thy perfections, we would draw near to thee for a moment, who for ever art near to us, and



would think of our own lives in the light of thy countenance, and so gird up our souls for duty, and strengthen ourselves for every care and every cross thou layest on us. We know that thou needest nothing at our hands nor at our heart, but in our weakness, conscious of our infinite need of thee, we would strengthen ourselves by the prayer of a moment for the service of a day, and a week, and all our lives.

We thank thee for the world wherein thou hast cast the lines of our lot. We bless thee for the material universe where thou hast placed us. We thank thee for the heavens over our heads, purple and golden in their substance, and jewelled all over by night with such refulgent fires. We thank thee for the moon which there walks in beauty, shedding her romantic glory on the slumbering ground, and making poetic the rudest thing in country or in town. We thank thee for that great sun which brings us the dayspring from on high, and fringes the earth at morning and at evening with such evangelic beauty, and all day warms the great growing world with thy loving-kindness and thy tender mercy too. We thank thee for the earth underneath our feet, and the garment of green beauty wherewith the shoulders of the northern world are now so sumptuously clad. We thank thee for the harvest of bread for the cattle and of bread for man, growing out of the ground, and waving in the summer wind. We thank thee for the beauty which thou en-thronest in every leaf, which thou incarnatest in every little grass, and wherewith thou fringest the brooks which run among the hills, and borderest the paths which men have trod in wood and field.

We thank thee likewise for the noble nature which thou hast given to us, for this spiritual earth and heaven

which we are; we thank thee for the glow of material splendor, of purple and of gold, wherewith thou investest us, and for the more than starry beauty with which our souls are jeweled forth. We thank thee for the lesser truths which walk in beauty in our infantile darkness, and the greater which in manhood's prime shed down the constant day, and fringe with morning and with evening beauty our manly life. We thank thee for the other harvests, both of beauty and of use, which grow out from the human soul, for the truths that we know, for the justice that we see, for the love that we feel to our brother-men, and all the manifold felicities we gather from the accordance of congenial souls that make sweet music on the earth. We bless thee for our dear ones, folded in our arms, sheltered underneath our roof, fed with the toil of our hands or our heads, for those who are bone of our bone and flesh of our flesh, and those others not less who are soul of our soul. We thank thee for those who daily or weekly gather with us, the benediction to our eyes, their voice the household music of our hearts, and for those also who are scattered abroad, and are of us still, though no longer with us. We thank thee for all these joys which thou givest to our earthly flesh and to our heavenly soul.

We bless thee for thyself, that we know of thine infinite perfections, thy power unending, thy justice all-righteous, thy wisdom all-knowing, and thy love which blesses and saves mankind with beatitudes which we did not know or dared not ask, and could not even dream of in our highest mood of prayer. We thank thee that while thou foldest the great universe in thine arms and carest for every system of suns and stars, not less thou feedest every little plant with sacra-

mental cup from each cloud, holding a blessing for the trees and the grass. We thank thee that thou also watchest over the spider's nightly web spread out upon the grass, and carest for every great and every little thing, and art Father and Mother to all the things that be. O Lord, we thank thee that thou lovest us not only for what we are to-day, and for the small service we render to each other; but as no earthly father, as no mortal mother loves her only child, so thou lovest us, not for the service that our hands can render, or our grateful hearts in hymns of thanksgiving can ever pray, but from thine own sweet infinitude of love pourest out thine affection on Jew and Gentile, on Christian and heathen, loving thy sinner as thou dost thy saint.

We pray thee that, so gifted, and surrounded so, and thus watched over by thy providence, we may know thee as thou art, and love thee with all our understanding and our heart and soul. May we keep the law which day by day thou writest eternally on our flesh and in our soul, and serve thee with every limb of our body, with our spirit's every faculty, and whatsoever power we gain over matter or over man. In us may there be such love and such trust in thee that we shall keep every law, do every duty, and make ourselves in thy sight as fair as the flowers on earth, or the stars in heaven. May no unclean thing stain our hands, no wicked feeling despoil us of beauty within our heart, and may we love our brothers as ourselves, and thee above all. Thus from the baby-bud whereinto we were born, may we open the great manly and womanly glory of the flower of earthly life, and bear fruit of eternal life in thy kingdom of heaven. So day by day may thy kingdom come, and thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

## XXXV

O thou Infinite Spirit, who dwellest in houses made with hands, and everywhere not less hast thy dwelling-place, we flee unto thee to remember before thee the joys we delight in, the duties thou givest us to do, and the sorrows we needs must bear, and in the light of thy countenance we would be strengthened for every duty, and filled with gratitude for every joy thou givest. As thou feedest the ground with sunlight from on high, and waterest it, when it asketh not, from thy sacramental cup, out of the heavens, so we know that thou wilt feed and water us with thy bounty, and needest not that we should ask thee; but in our darkness we turn unto thee for light, and in our weakness, from thine infinitude we would fill our little urns with strength, and make ourselves beautiful in thy sight.

O thou who art our Father and our Mother, we thank thee for the loving-kindness and the tender mercy which are over all thy works. We bless thee for the harvests of bread which are growing out of the ground under the incessant heat of summer, and we thank thee for the exceeding beauty wherewith thou givest thy benediction on the daily bread not less of cattle than of men. We thank thee for the transient flowers which line the wayside, and clothe the hedges and adorn the fields with heavenly magnificence, and we thank thee for all that perennial beauty which thou enthronest in the stars on high. We bless thee for the moon's romantic story, every night told to us, and the glorious loveliness of day which the sun pours out from the golden urn of thy magnificence. We bless thee that thou hast lined the borders of the sea with



green and purple beauty, and scarfed the mountains with savage loveliness, and with the morning's and the evening's twofold ring of beauty thou marriest for ever the day and night, revealing in this material magnificence tokens and signs of thine own loving-kindness, which passeth knowledge, and the sovereign beauty of thy spirit, which steals into our souls.

Father, we thank thee that, creating this world so great and adorning it so fair, thou hast yet made our spirit vaster than the bounds of time and space, and givest us power to adorn it with magnificence that shames the green and purple lining of the sea, and to put the stars of heaven out of sight with its sweet glory and the bravery of its spiritual loveliness. We thank thee for the great nature thou hast given us; we bless thee for its power of ceaseless progress, of continually growing greater and nobler, and fairer decked with beauty springing from the innermost of our soul. We thank thee for every triumph which mankind has won, for all the great truths which have come sounding musical from past times, for all the noble men whom in distant days thou raisedst up out of humanity to tell us of our power, and in their lives to reveal to us so much of thyself.

We thank thee for men and women in our own time not less gifted, nor less faithful, who also speak as thou inspirest them, telling words of truth and of justice and of love, and by street-side, and in lane, and house, and everywhere, pursuing the calm and beautiful gospel of their lives, wherein they publish humanity to all mankind.

We thank thee for all that has come to us from past times and our own day. We bless thee for the special gifts thou givest to us in our several families



and homes and hearts. We thank thee for the newborn life we rejoice in, and for other lives that are spared, long familiar to our eyes and our heart.

We bless thee for the various seasons of life, thanking thee for the little bud of infancy, and for the great handsome flower of manly and womanly life, fragrant with hope, and prophetic in its beauty. And not less do we thank thee for the ripened fruit of humanity; yea, we bless thee for venerable age, crowned with silver, and rich with the recollections and the beatitudes of many deeds well done. We thank thee for all the joy thou givest in this manifold human life to child and parent, to lover and beloved, to husband and wife, kinsfolk and relative and friend, and the gladsome benediction which thus thou settest on thy children's head. Yea, we thank thee that when our mortal spring has bloomed out, when our earthly summer is ended and vanished, and the ripened fruit falls from our human tree, the seed thereof thou takest to thyself to be with thee for ever and for ever. Yea, we thank thee for that transcendent world where thou takest to thyself the souls of all thy children, having no son of perdition, and blessing all with thine infinite fatherly and motherly love.

Remembering all these things, we pray thee that we may live great and glorious lives, full of the strength of humanity, and enriched with the benedictions from thyself. May we use our bodies wisely, counting them but as the earthen vessels to hold the spiritual treasure thou givest us. In the innermost of our soul may we dwell familiar with thee, knowing all of thine infinite perfections, and so loving thee that our love shall cast out every fear, and we shall keep the law thou writest on this world of matter, and with thy still small voice

proclaimeſt within the innermoſt of our ſoul. Day by day may we grow to higher and higher heights, and as new-born blessings drop into our arms, as old familiar lives are ſpared to us, may we grow nobler and brighter by the blessings thou givest, till within us all ſhall be blameless, and outward everything ſhall be beautiful, and we ſhall paſs from the glory of a good beginning to the greater glory of a triumphant end. So may thy kingdom come, and thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

## XXXVI

O thou Infinite One, who art the perpetual preſence in matter and in mind, we flee unto thee, in whom we live and move and have our being, and for a moment would hold thee in our conſciouſneſs, that from the morning worſhip of our Sabbath day we may learn to ſerve thee all the days of our lives, ſtrengthened thereby and made bleſſed.

We thank thee for the great world of matter, whereof thou buildeſt our bodies up, and whence thou feedeſt them continually from day to day. We thank thee for the fervent heat of ſummer, wherewith thou provideſt the food for cattle and for men, and ſatiateſt the wants of every plant; and we thank thee for the rain which in its ſeaſon thou ſheddeſt down on meadows newly mown, to call up new harveſts where the farmer has already gathered one. We thank thee for the bleſſing of heat and of moiſture, thy two great ſervants which ſo myſteriouſly create this vegetable world. We thank thee for the harveſts grown or growing ſtill out of the ground, and greatening and beautifying on many a tree. We thank thee for the bread of oxen and of men, which human toil by

thy laws wins from out the ground, which thou feedest from the sun and the waters from thine own sweet heavens.

We thank thee that while thus thou ministerest unto us things that are useful, thou givest us also the benediction of beauty, not only on our own bread, but on all the food wherewith thou satisfiest the wants of every living thing. We thank thee for the great gospel of nature which thou hast writ, and revealest continually in the heavens over us, in the ground under us, and in the air whereby both we and all things continually live.

We thank thee for that greater world of spirit whereof thou buildest up our several persons, for the vast capabilities which thou givest to us, the power to know, to feel, to will, to worship, and to serve and trust. We thank thee for the power of infinite growth which thou givest to thy child mankind, and impartest also unto each of us.

We thank thee for all the blessings which have come to us from the men of times past. We bless thee for the great whom thou hast gifted with large talents and with genius, whom thou sendest from age to age to be the leaders and the guides of thy children, marshaling us the way that we should go. We thank thee for such as have brought scientific truth to light, for those who have organized into families and communities and states and nations thy multitudinous children on the earth. We bless thee for all who have taught us truth, who have shown us justice, and have revealed thyself to us in all thine infinite beauty, and have taught us to live a blameless life of love. We thank thee for thy prophets, thy evangelists, who in every tongue have spoken to mankind, doing great service

to the millions who are about them, waiting for such high instruction.

We thank thee for him whom in days long since thou raisedst up in the midst of darkness to establish light, and though mankind has worshiped our brother whom we ought but to follow and to imitate, guided by his light and warned by what was ill, yet we thank thee for the great truths he proclaimed in speech, and the noble life that he lived on earth, showing us the way to thee, telling us the truth from thee, and living so much of that life that is in thee and with thee for ever and ever.

And not less do we thank thee for men with talents no smaller in our own days, who likewise serve their fellows by telling truth and proclaiming justice, and living the calm, sweet life which is piety within and philanthropic love without. We bless thee for those whose gladdening feet print the earth with the benediction of their presence, for those whose toilsome hands do good continually to mankind, and ask no return, for those whose large mind carries the lamp which is to guide mankind from Egyptian darkness to a large, fair place, where they shall dwell together in gladness and in peace; and for such as reveal to our consciousness the great truths of thine infinite goodness, power, and love, and who incarnate them in life,—O Lord; we thank thee for these, the prophets and apostles, the sages and the saints of our own day, called by whatever name, and wherever the lines of their lot be cast.

We remember before thee thine own infinite perfection, and while we thank thee for the world of matter and the world of spirit, which are thy gifts, still more do we thank thee for thyself who art the giver, fold-



ing in thy bosom other worlds of matter which we know not of, and worlds of spirit whereof we dimly learn, and whereunto with continual yearning our spirit would ascend. We thank thee for thy providence, which, mid many a dark day that seems to us Egyptian night, marks the lintels of every door, and broods over every land, and with thy love comes into every household, great or small, and never departs thence, but leaves thy blessing ever fresh and ever new.

We remember our lives before thee, our several joys that we thank thee for, and yet know not how to thank thee as we ought. The sorrows thou givest us,—we dare not praise thee for them, but in their darkness and their cloud, we still thank thee that thy light comes through the darkness, and thy hand is underneath the cloud, leading us forward through them to better and more glorious things.

We remember our daily duties, how hard they often are, and we pray thee that we may use the noble faculties thou hast given us so as to bear every cross which must needs be borne, and grow greater by suffering what we needs must endure, and doing what thou commandest as our duty, and so being what thou wouldst have us be. Father we pray thee that in us there may be such knowledge of thee, such love towards thee, and such trust in thee, and such a noble pious life in ourselves, that we shall bring every limb of our body and our spirits' every faculty into thy service, and so outwardly, not less than inwardly, live lives that are as fair as the lilies of the stream or the stars of heaven, and so be blameless and beautiful and acceptable in thy sight. Thus may thy kingdom come, and thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.



## XXXVII

Our Father who art in heaven, and on earth, and everywhere, we flee unto thee, and for a moment would be conscious of thy presence, and in the light of thy countenance would we remember our joys and our sorrows, our duties, our transgressions, and our hopes, and lift up to thee the glad psalm of gratitude for all that we rejoice in, and aspire towards the measure of a perfect man, and so worship thee that we shall serve thee all the days of our lives with a gladsome and accepted service. So may the prayer of our hearts be acceptable unto thee, and come out in our daily life as fair as the lilies and lasting as the stars.

Our Father who art everywhere, and givest to thy creatures liberally and upbraidest not, we thank thee for the world of matter over our head and under our feet and about us on every side. We thank thee for the serene and stormy days wherewith thou equally givest thy sacrament of benediction to all things that are. We bless thee for all which the summer has thus far brought forth, for the great harvests of use which have grown alike for the cattle that serve and for imperial man who commands the things that are about him and above him and underneath his feet, and for the beauty wherewith thou broiderest every field-side and roadside, and clothest the bosom of the stream, which blossoms with fragrant loveliness. We thank thee for the great psalm of creation, where day by day, when there is no voice nor language, star speaketh unto flower, and flower speaketh unto star, and the ocean proclaims to the sky the power, the order, the mind, the loving-kindness, and the tender mercy of thy spirit, dwelling in every great and every little thing.

We thank thee for this human world whereof ourselves are a part, for the vast faculties which thou hast given us. For the fair bodies, the crown of creation, so curiously and wonderfully made, with senses which take hold of each material thing and feed thereon, converting its use and its beauty to means of human growth, we thank thee, and for this great power which thou givest us, feeding alike on truth and beauty, gaining the victory over material things, making the ground, the winds and the waters, the stars and the very fire of heaven, to serve our various needs. We thank thee for this great moral power, whereby our conscience comes into accord with thine, and we know thy justice and make it our human rule of conduct, making ourselves useful to each other and acceptable to thee.

We thank thee for these generous affections which, unselfish, reach out their arms to father and mother, to kinsfolk and friend, to lover and beloved, husband and wife, parent and child, and all the great relationships wherewith the world is full. We thank thee for the greatening power of charity, which transcends the bounds of family and kindred blood, of acquaintance and congenial soul, and goes for ever loving on, careful for those who are cast down, and seeking to bless with light those who are sitting benighted in the corners of the earth, to strike the fetters from the slave, to give knowledge to the ignorant, and to teach virtue and piety to men that are bound together in their sins, in nowise able to lift themselves up.

Father, we thank thee that we know thee; we bless thee for this great religious faculty, whereby we turn this world of matter and the world of soul into one great accordant psalm, and even the voices of the

beasts that perish come to our ears full of religious melody, reminding us of thy providence, which is kind and large and not only to angels and to men, but to the meanest thing which serves thy purpose in the world.

Father, we thank thee for that transcendent world, embracing the earth of matter and the humanity of men, that world of spirits which thou thyself inhabitest, and whereunto thou drawest thy children from year to year, as thine angel strikes off the fetters of our flesh, and clothes us with immortality. Father, we thank thee for our dear ones who have gone before us, where the mortal eye sees them not, but where the human heart knows it is well with the child, and that thou stillest the agonies of father, husband, wife or lover, with thy sweet beneficence, and art kind and merciful alike to thy saint and thy sinner. We thank thee for that other world which draws our eyes through our tears and our darkness and fills us with hope. We bless thee for thine own infinite perfection, that we can rest under the shadow of thine almighty power, thine all-knowing wisdom, thine all-righteous justice, and thine all-embracing love, which never end. O Lord, our Father and our Mother too, we know that we need not ask any good thing from thee, nor in our prayer beseech thee to remember us, for thou lovest us more than we can love ourselves, and art more desirous of our infinite welfare than we for our prosperity a single day.

We pray thee therefore that ourselves may be faithful to all the gifts which thou hast given us. Remembering thine infinite love and thy tender providence, may we put away all fear from us, and shaking off every particle of superstitious dust, may we open our

souls to that glorious love which shall not be ashamed, but constrains us to keep every law which thou hast writ for us. So knowing thee and trusting thee, may we never think meanly of the nature thou hast given to us, but use these bodies as the vessels which hold the precious treasure thou hast poured therein, and with our mind and our conscience and our heart and our soul may we serve thee daily by that worship in spirit and in truth which alone achieves the great end of human destination. So using ourselves, may we wisely use the world of matter that is about us, and by our daily toil not only house and clothe and feed and medicine our flesh, but by the process thereof instruct our intellect and enlarge our conscience, fertilize our affections, and magnify this religious power that is in us. So day by day may we serve thee with perfect service, and when thou hast finished thy work with us, then, triumphant, may we journey home to be with thee, to know thee as ourselves are known, and pass from glory to glory for ever and ever, entering into those joys which the eye has not seen, nor the ear heard, nor the heart of man completely known. So may thy kingdom come, and thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

## XXXVIII

O thou Infinite Presence, who art everywhere, we flee unto thee for a moment, who art always near unto us. We would be conscious of thy power, thy wisdom, thy justice, and thy love, and while we feel thee most intimate at our hearts, we would remember before thee our joys and our sorrows, our hopes and our fears, whatever of virtue we have attained to, and the transgressions also wherewith we defile our souls.



May the words of our mouths and the meditations of our hearts be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, our Strength and our Redeemer.

O thou Infinite Giver of all things, we thank thee for this great, rich world, where thou castest the lines of our lot. We thank thee for the exceeding beauty which thou hast scattered throughout the heavens and everywhere on this broad earth of thine. We thank thee that thou moldest every leaf into a form of beauty, and globeest every ripening berry into symmetric loveliness, that thou scatterest along the roadsides of the world and on the fringes of the farmer's field such wealth and luxuriance of beauty to charm our eyes from things too sensual, and slowly lift us up to what is spiritual in its loveliness and cannot pass away. We thank thee for the glory which walks abroad at night, for the moon with interchange of waxing and waning beauty, shedding her silver radiance across the darkness, for every fixed and every wandering star whose bearded presence startles us with strange and fairest light, and for the imperial sun that from his ambrosial urn pours down the day on field and town, on rich and poor, baptizing all thy world with joy. We thank thee for the ground underneath our feet, whence the various particles of our bodies are day by day so curiously taken and wonderfully framed together. We thank thee for the spring, which brought her handsome promise, for the gorgeous preparation which the summer made in his manly strength, and we bless thee for the months of autumn, whose sober beauty now is cast on every hill and every tree. We thank thee for the harvests which the toil and the thought of man have gathered already from the surface of the ground, or digged from its



bosom. We bless thee for the other harvests still growing beneath the earth, or hanging abundant beauties in the autumnal sun from many a tree, all over our blessed northern land.

We thank thee likewise for this great human world which ourselves make up. We bless thee for the glorious nature which thou hast given us, for these bodies so curiously and so wonderfully made, and for this overmastering spirit which enchants into life this handful of fascinated clay. We bless thee for the large faculties which thou hast given us, and the unbounded means for development afforded in our daily toil. We thank thee for the glorious destination which thou hast set before us, appointing us our duties to do, and giving us that grand and lasting welfare which thou wilt never fail to bestow on all and each who ask it with their prayer and toil.

Father, we thank thee for the work which our hands find to do on earth. We bless thee that the process of our toil is education for our body and our mind, for our conscience and our heart and soul. We thank thee for the reward which comes as the result of our work; yea, we bless thee for the houses that we live in, for the garments that we wear, woven up of thoughtful human toil, for the bread that we eat, and the beauty that we gather from the ground, or create from the manifold material things which thou givest us.

We thank thee for those who are near and dear to us, the benediction on our daily bread, the presence of blessing in our house, and the chief ornament of our human life. We thank thee for new-born blessings which thou sendest into the arms of father and of mother, to gladden them not only, but likewise relative

and friend, and to people the earth with new generations of progressive men.

Father, we remember before thee likewise that other world which transcends the earth of matter and the world of human things; we thank thee for that world which the eye hath not seen, nor the ear heard, nor the heart of man fully conceived. We bless thee for the spirits of just men made perfect who have gone before us into that kingdom of heaven, to shine like the morning stars of earth, free from all the noises which harass the world. Father, we remember before thee those dear to our hearts still, though severed from our side, and if we dare not thank thee when father or mother, when husband or wife, when son or daughter, when kinsfolk and acquaintance have their countenance changed, and they themselves are born anew into thy kingdom, we still thank thee that we are sure they are with thee, that no evil befalls the little one, or the mature one, or the aged, but the arms of thy love are about them, and thou leadest them ever forward and ever upward.

O thou who art infinite perfection, we thank thee for thyself; and we know that out of thy power, thy wisdom, thy justice, and thy love, have flowed forth this world of matter, and this world of man, and that kingdom of heaven whereinto we all hope to enter at the last. We thank thee for thy loving-kindness and thy tender mercy, which are over all thy works, and where we cannot see, save through a glass darkly, we will still trust thee, with infinite longing and with absolute confidence, and that love which casteth out every fear.

Father in heaven, so gifted as we are, surrounded so, and so destined for immortal welfare, we pray thee

that we may live great and noble lives on the earth, unfolding our nature day by day, using our bodies for their purpose, and the soul for its higher use, growing wiser and better as we change time into life, and daily work into exalted character. So may we live that every day we learn some new truth, practise some new virtue, and become dearer and more beautiful in thine own sight. So may thy kingdom come, and thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

## XXXIX

O thou Infinite Spirit, who art always present, we know that we need not ask thee to remember us, and though in the weakness of our psalm we thus entreat thee, yet in the strength of our heart's prayer we know that thou needest no entreating, but rememberest us for ever and for ever. O thou who art our Father, we thank thee that all day long thou hast us in thy perfect care, and when the night comes, and we lay us down, that thou still watchest over us, and givest to thy beloved even in our sleep. Father, we will not ask thee to draw nigh unto us, for thou livest and movest and hast thy being in all things that are, and most eminent in our own soul. But we will seek to draw near unto thee, that, warmed by thy fire and strengthened by thy light, from the moment of our worship, we may serve thee better all the days of our mortal life.

Father, we thank thee for thyself. We bless thee that thou createdst us and all things from thy perfect love, and pre-appointed us all to infinite and eternal welfare, and in the world about us and the world within didst wonderfully provide the means thereto, so that our follies even shall help us, and the wrath of man

shall serve thy great purpose, and the remainder of wrath thou wilt restrain. O Lord, who art our Father and our Mother too, we thank thee that thy love never fails, that though our mortal friends perish from out our sight, though father and mother may forget us, and we be faithless to our own selves, yet thou never leavest, nor forsakest, nor art unfaithful, but lovest us far more than we are able to ask, or even to think or to wish in the extreme of our heart.

We bless thee for the world thou hast given us all around. We thank thee for the summer's beauty that has passed, leaving behind her the autumnal grain, and the rich and bountiful fruits of harvest. And now that the winter is upon us, we bless thee for this angel whom thou hast sent down to clothe the earth in white raiment, and adorn it with loveliness, this garment of snow which thou so sweetly administerest out of thy heavens to all these northern lands, which hang on thy bounty and are fed from thy never-ending love.

We thank thee for all the blessings which we have inherited from ages gone before us. We bless thee for so much of civilization as has fallen to our lot, for the noble institutions which our fathers builded up with their prayer and their toil, with their sword and their blood. We thank thee for every wise thing in our government which has come down to us, for all the excellence which is in our social organizations, for the friendly affection which adorns our household and our home. We thank thee for those schools of the people where thou instructest thy children from day to day; we bless thee for the sweet influences which proceed thence and enrich mankind, while they instruct and lift us up. We thank thee for all the good there is in the churches called after thy name; we bless thee



for all the various denominations on the earth, thanking thee that their several faith — whether heathen, or Greek, or Jew, or Christian — is to them of such infinite worth. We bless thee for all of truth which we may have gathered from the various religions of the world, and most of all for what we have learned of thyself, in the calm and still communing of our own heart with thee. We thank thee that thou inspirest all of thy children, who, with open mind and obedient heart, flee unto thee, seeking for truth, for justice, for love, and the sweet piety which so adorns and beautifies the inner man.

We bless thee for the dear ones whom affection joins to our heart, bone of our bone, flesh of our flesh, or joined by a still nearer and more delicious kindred of the soul. O Lord, we remember the friendships which time and distance cannot sever, we remember the love of kinsfolk and acquaintance, whom death only hides from our eye, but does not take from our heart. We thank thee for the just ones made perfect who have gone from us, and those who in their imperfection have been translated, for we know that thou placest them in the line of advancement, and leadest them ever upwards, and still further on.

We remember the great duties which are before us, incumbent on such natures and so large an inheritance and such ample opportunity for toil. We remember before thee with shame and confusedness of heart our own weakness, our folly and our pride, and the manifold transgressions wherewith we sin against our body or our soul, against thy goodness, O thou Infinite Mother, who holdest us in thy hand, and warmest us with the breath of thy love. And we pray thee that we may put away every folly, and be greatly chastised



for every wrong, till, penitent therefor, we turn from it, and, though with bleeding feet, tread the paths of righteousness, leading us to peace and gladness and joy of soul.

Father, we will not pray thee for this world's goods; we know not of these things how to pray thee as we ought; therefore we dare not ask thee for riches or for poverty, for length of life, nor for shortness of days. But we pray thee that we may so toil in our various lot that we grow wiser and better, that we have a sure and abiding sense of thy goodness, thy power, and thy love, and of the great and noble nature thou hast given us, and the glorious destination thou hast prepared. Then may our hands work out our own salvation, with joy and with gladness then may we toil for our brother men; and our poor and humble lives,—may they enrich and magnify the age we live in. Thus day by day may we serve thee, and so may thy kingdom come, and thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

## XL

O thou who art everywhere, whom no eye can see, but every heart can feel, we flee unto thee, and for a moment would hold thee in our consciousness, who art not far from any one of us, but always hast us in thy care and keeping, watching over and doing us good. We would remember before thee our joys and our sorrows, our hopes and our fears, our good deeds and our transgressions, and while we meditate thereon, may we be penitent for every wrong deed, and greatly ashamed of all wickedness, but filled with noble aspirations, which shall bear us up to higher and higher heights of human excellence. O thou who art ever

near us, may thy spirit pray with us in our prayer, teaching us the things we ought to pray for, and strengthening us mightily in the inner man.

O thou Infinite Spirit, we thank thee for all thy loving-kindness and thy tender mercy, which gave us our being first, and lengthenest out our lives from day to day, and from year to year, while thou presentest before us the immortal life, which eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor our frail hearts completely understood.

We thank thee for this fair sunlight which gladdens and cheers the faces of men, while it fills up with handsomeness the wintry hour. We thank thee for the stars, which all night long keep shining watch above a sleeping world; and we bless thee for thy providence, which cares for us when we slumber, and when we wake. Yea, we thank thee that underneath thy care we can lay us down and sleep in safety, and when we wake we are still with thee.

While we stand at the entrance of a new year, remembering thy presence with us, we cast our eyes backward, and we thank thee for all the joy and the gladness which came to our lot in the months that are past. We thank thee for the health and energy that have been in our earthly frame. We bless thee for the work our hands found to do, for the joy which comes from the harvested result of our toil and thought, and that greater but unasked joy and blessedness which comes from the education which the process of our daily toil in thy marvelous providence doth bring about.

Father, we thank thee for the new ties of mortal love which we have formed on earth, whereby eyes behold light in mutual eyes, and hearts that once were twain become one. We thank thee for the new-born

blessings, these little Messiahs which thy loving-kindness has left in many an earnest home. We bless thee for all the joys which spring from the various affections of life, which set the solitary in families, and of twain make one, and thence bring manifold life to increase and multiply and gladden the world.

Father, we remember before thee the sorrows and disappointments with which we have sometimes been tried. We remember the dear ones whom thou hast taken from our mortal arms, whose countenance thou hast changed, and whom thou hast sent away; and though we have not always been strong enough to understand thy providence, or to welcome the hand which took, as that which gave, yet we thank thee that through the darkness that surrounded us we can see a great and marvelous light, whereunto we are marching step by step, whither our dear ones are gone before, not lost, but found in thee. O Father on earth, Father in heaven, Father and Mother too, we thank thee for that other world whither so many of our friends are gone, and whither our own faces are also set. We thank thee that we are conscious of our immortality, and sure that when we drop the body we are clothed upon with immortal life, and pass from glory to glory, in a progress which can never end.

We remember before thee the sins and transgressions which we have often committed; we remember the wrong deeds that we have done, the unholy feelings that we have cherished, and the wicked thoughts which have sometimes come into our minds, and been bidden to rest and tarry there. O Lord, full of pain and sadness for every wrong deed we have done, for the unholy words we have spoken, and the wicked feelings we have nourished in us, we pray thee that we may

not be cast down by our penitence, but ashamed of our transgression, and warned by our fall, walk more heedfully in times that are to come, and journey from strength to strength, our hands uplifted, and our hearts sustained by thee.

O thou who knowest what all time shall bring forth, we cast our eyes forward, and though every day is hidden in darkness before our eyes, we pray thee that there may be such light within our heart, that it shall make it all glorious light about us, from hour to hour, and in the strength that thou givest us may we do the appointed duty of each day, and reverently bear its cross, and so fill up all our time with thy service. Within us may the true religion find its temple and its home; may thy great truths dwell in us, and the noble feelings of love to each other, and unchanging and perfect love to thee; here may they live and do their perfect work; may they bring down every high thought which exults itself unduly, may they tame every unworthy passion, and change our ambition from evil into good, so that all our days shall be thy days, our prayer thy worship, and our life thy continual service, and all our earthly days be made gladsome and glorious in thy sight. Then, when thou hast finished thy work with us on earth, may we lift up our eyes towards thee with gladness and great joy, and go home to that world where all tears are wiped from every eye, and where sorrow and sighing shall come no more, but we shall shine in the light of thy love, and pass from glory to glory.

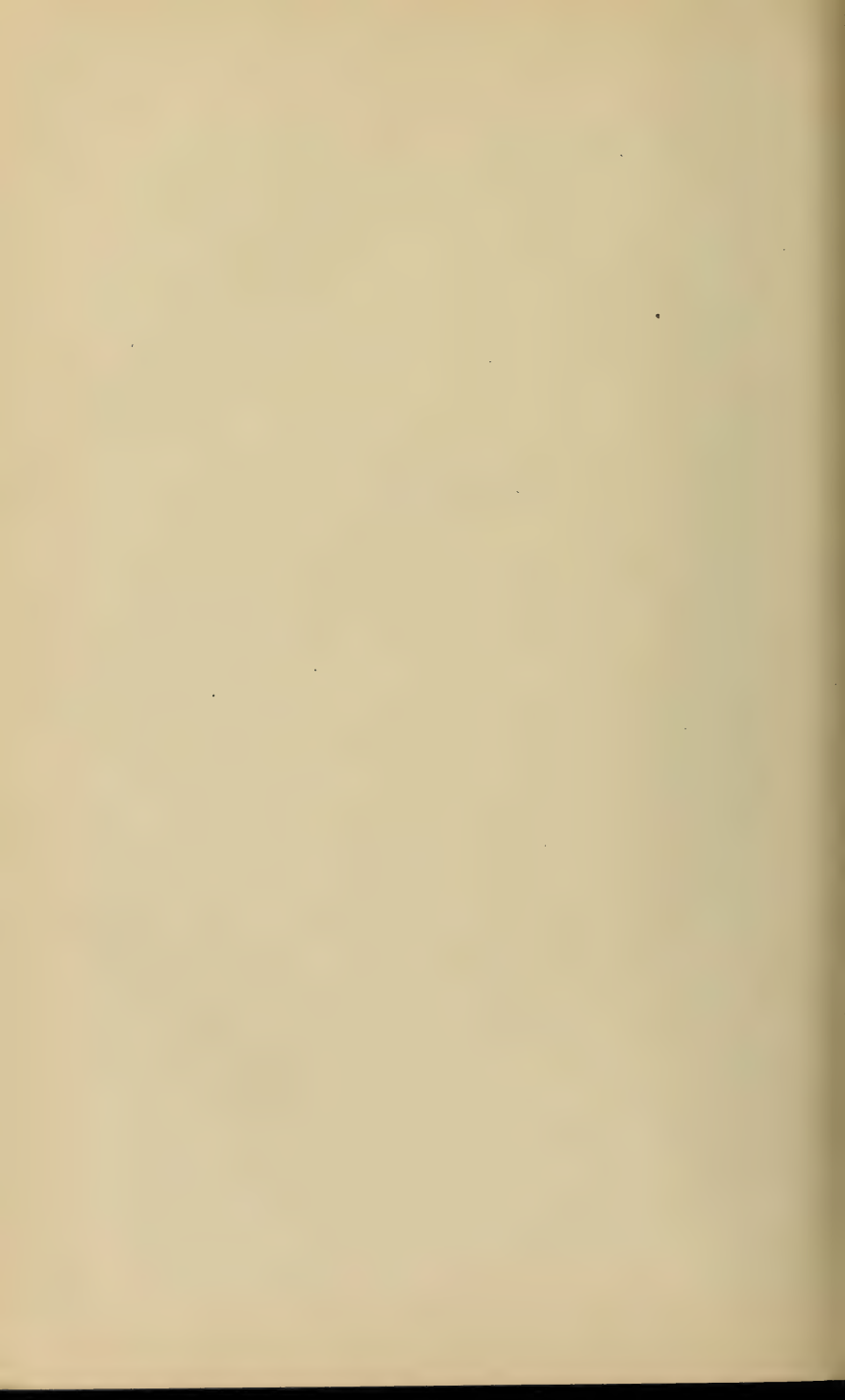
Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. May thy kingdom come, and thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven. Give us each day our daily bread. Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those

who trespass against us. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from its evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory for ever. Amen.





## **PARABLES**



## I

# TRUTH AGAINST THE WORLD

### A PARABLE OF PAUL

One day Abdiel found Paul at Tarsus, after his Damascus journey, sitting meek and thoughtful at the door of his house; his favorite books, and the instruments of his craft, lying neglected beside him. "Strange tidings I hear of you," said the sleek Rabbi. "You also have become a follower of the Nazarene! What course shall you pursue after your precious conversion?" "I shall go and preach the Gospel to all nations," said the new convert, gently. "I shall set off to-morrow."

The Rabbi, who felt a sour interest in Paul, looked at him with affected incredulity, and asked, "Do you know the sacrifice you make? You must leave father and friends; the society of the great and the wise. You will fare hard, and encounter peril. You will be impoverished; called hard names; persecuted; scourged; perhaps put to death." "None of these things move me," said Paul. "I have counted the cost. I value not life the half so much as keeping God's law and proclaiming the truth, though all men forbid. I shall walk by God's light, and fear not. I am no longer a slave to the old law of sin and death, but a free man of God, made free by the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus." "Here," rejoined the Rabbi, "you have ease, and fame; in your new work you must meet toil, infamy, and death." "The voice of God says, Go," exclaimed the Apostle with firm-

ness; "I am ready to spend and be spent in the cause of truth."

"Die, then," roared the Rabbi, "like a Nazarene fool, and unbelieving atheist, as thou art. He that lusts after new things, preferring his silly convictions, and that whim of a conscience, to solid ease, and the advice of his friends, deserves the cross. Die in thy folly. Henceforth I disclaim thee. Call me kinsman no more!"

Years passed over; the word of God grew and prevailed. One day it was whispered at Tarsus, and ran swiftly from mouth to mouth in the market-place, "Paul, the apostate, lies in chains at Rome, daily expecting the lions. His next trouble will be his last." And Abdiel said to his sacerdotal cronies in the synagogue, "I knew it would come to this. How much better to have kept to his trade, and the old ways of his fathers and the prophets, not heeding that whim of a conscience. He might have lived respectably to an easy old age at Tarsus, the father of sons and daughters. Men might have called him 'Rabbi' in the streets."

Thus went it at Tarsus. But meantime, in his dungeon at Rome, Paul sat comforted. The Lord stood by him in a vision, and said, "Fear not, Paul. Thou hast fought the good fight. Lo! I am with thee to the end of the world." The tranquil old man replied, "I know whom I have served, and am thoroughly persuaded that God will keep what I have committed to Him. I have not the spirit of fear, but of love, and a sound mind. I shall finish my course with joy, for I see the crown of righteousness laid up for me, and now my salvation is more perfect, and my hope is higher, than when first I believed."



Then in his heart spoke that voice, which had spoken before on the Mount of Transfiguration, "Thou also art my beloved son. In thee am I well pleased."

## II

## HOW TO MOVE THE WORLD

One day a philosopher came to Athens, from a far country, to learn the ways of the wonderful Greeks, and perhaps to teach them the great lore he treasured in his heart. The wise men heard him; sought his company in the gardens; talked with him in private. The young men loved him. He passed for a wonder with that wonder-loving people. Among those that followed him, was the son of Sophroniscus, an ill-favored young man, a mechanic of humble rank. He was one of the few that understood the dark, Oriental doctrines of the Sage, when he spoke of God, man, freedom, goodness, of the life that never dies. The young man saw these doctrines were pregnant with actions, and would one day work a revolution in the affairs of men, disinheriting many an ancient sin now held legitimate.

So he said to himself, when he saw a man rich and famous,—“Oh! that I also were rich and famous, I would move the world soon. Here are sins to be plucked up and truths to be planted. Oh! that I could do it all, I would mend the world right soon.” Yet he did nothing but wait for wealth and fame. One day the Sage heard him complain with himself, and said, “Young man, thou speakest as silly women. This gospel of God is writ for all. **LET HIM THAT WOULD MOVE THE WORLD MOVE FIRST HIMSELF.** He that would do good to men begins with what tools God

gives him, and gets more as the world gets on. It asks neither wealth nor fame, to live out a noble life, at the end of thy lane in Athens. Make thy light thy life; thy thought, action; others will come round. Thou askest a place to stand on hereafter and move the world. Foolish young man, take it where thou standest, and begin now. So the work shall go forward. Reform thy little self, and thou hast begun to reform the world. Fear not thy work shall die!"

The youth took the hint; reformed himself of his coarseness, his sneers, of all meanness that was in him. His idea became his life, and that blameless and lovely. His truth passed into the public mind as the sun into the air. His acorn is the father of forests. His influence passes like morning, from continent to continent, and the rich and the poor are blessed by the light and warmed by the life of Socrates, though they know not his name.

### III

#### PARABLE OF ISHMAEL

When Ishmael was a young man, motherless, an outcast, with no wife, nor child, nor friend, he rode on his only camel, laden with dates and corn, a few figs and olives, cummin and precious seeds, journeying through the desert to the fair of Surat. But his camel died in the wilderness, and for many days' journey did he wander on, barefoot and hungry, a ruined man, leaving his seed and all his fortune to perish there. "*The place is cursed, and God has forsaken me,*" said Ishmael. The sun burnt him, his lip was parched with thirst, yet he died not, but reached at last in safety the hospitable tent of Joktan.

Years passed on. Ishmael became a patriarch, rich, the father of many strong men. He traveled once again, in old age, with his wives and children, and his children's children, men-servants and maidens, and a multitude of camels, an exceeding great company, crossing the desert to go into the land of the Sabeans to die there. And lo! the hot wind of the desert came upon them; the water dried up in their leathern bottles; they were like to perish with thirst. The young men and maidens cried in their agony toward God. The old men bowed themselves and were silent, awaiting the stroke of the Lord. The moan of the camels it was tearful to hear. A day's journey of despair they travelled on, and came to a green forest, with date trees and corn, figs and olives, grass, and a running well. They sat down and were refreshed, and as Ishmael, heavy with years, slept after his fatigue at noon-day, behold the same angel who had appeared and led Hagar to the well in the desert, came and stood before him, and said, "Son of Abraham! rememberest thou thy camel that perished?" And Ishmael awoke, for he remembered it was here. He saw that of the corn and the dates, the few figs, the olives, the cummin and the precious seeds which he had mourned over as lost, this cluster of fruit trees had grown, and these fields of grass and corn. He blessed God and said, "Were it not for the misfortunes of my youth I had been ruined in my old age, and this great people with me. Wonderful are the ways of the Lord!" And he called the name of the place *Kol Dabar El*, for he said, "It is all God's work." And then he rested from his labors, and his tomb is there unto this day.

## IV

## PARABLE OF NATHAN BEN ELIM

Nathan ben Elim was a poor basket maker of Bagdat, with a limping foot and a single eye. Dwelling in a dirty lane, among the poorest of the destitute, he won a scanty bread for himself, his sickly wife and decrepit father. Early and late was Nathan at his toil — his frame was bent by labor, his face seared with want. Poverty and much distress was written all around him. Yet his face was a sunbeam, and the song of cheerfulness went up from his lips, ever as he wrought, or carried his light wares on his head for sale.

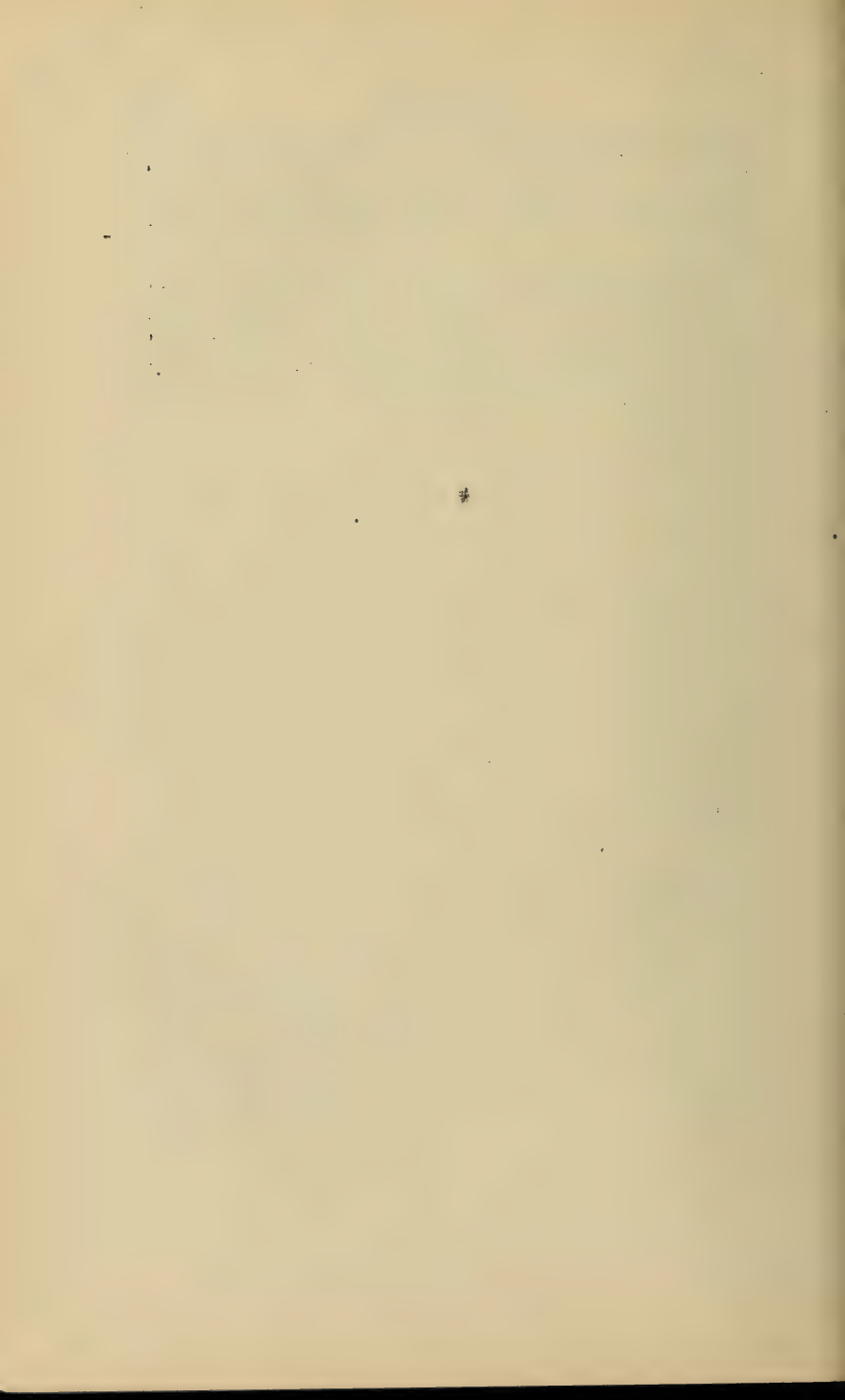
Mahomet, the servant of God, had often met him in the bazaar. He was struck with the cheerful repose that smiled out of his rent garments, and made poverty respectable. One day he sought the poor basket maker, as he sat in the only room in his house, and wove his baskets, intending to give alms to a man so deserving. "What maketh thee so happy?" said the unrecognized Prophet. "Thou art poor and ignorant, and often sick, yet thy face is like Gabriel's. Tell me the art to be blessed."

"Stranger," said he, "thou askest like silly women. I have but one eye, but he that has none may see how to be blessed. Why should not I be happy? True I have suffering enough and poverty; true, my children have all died before me, the last but forty days ago, slain by a ruffian; true my work is hard, and my wife a shrew, whom Job and Moses and Solomon could not suffer, nor Gabriel tame with a beam of gentleness. Still, why should not I be blessed? Three things only

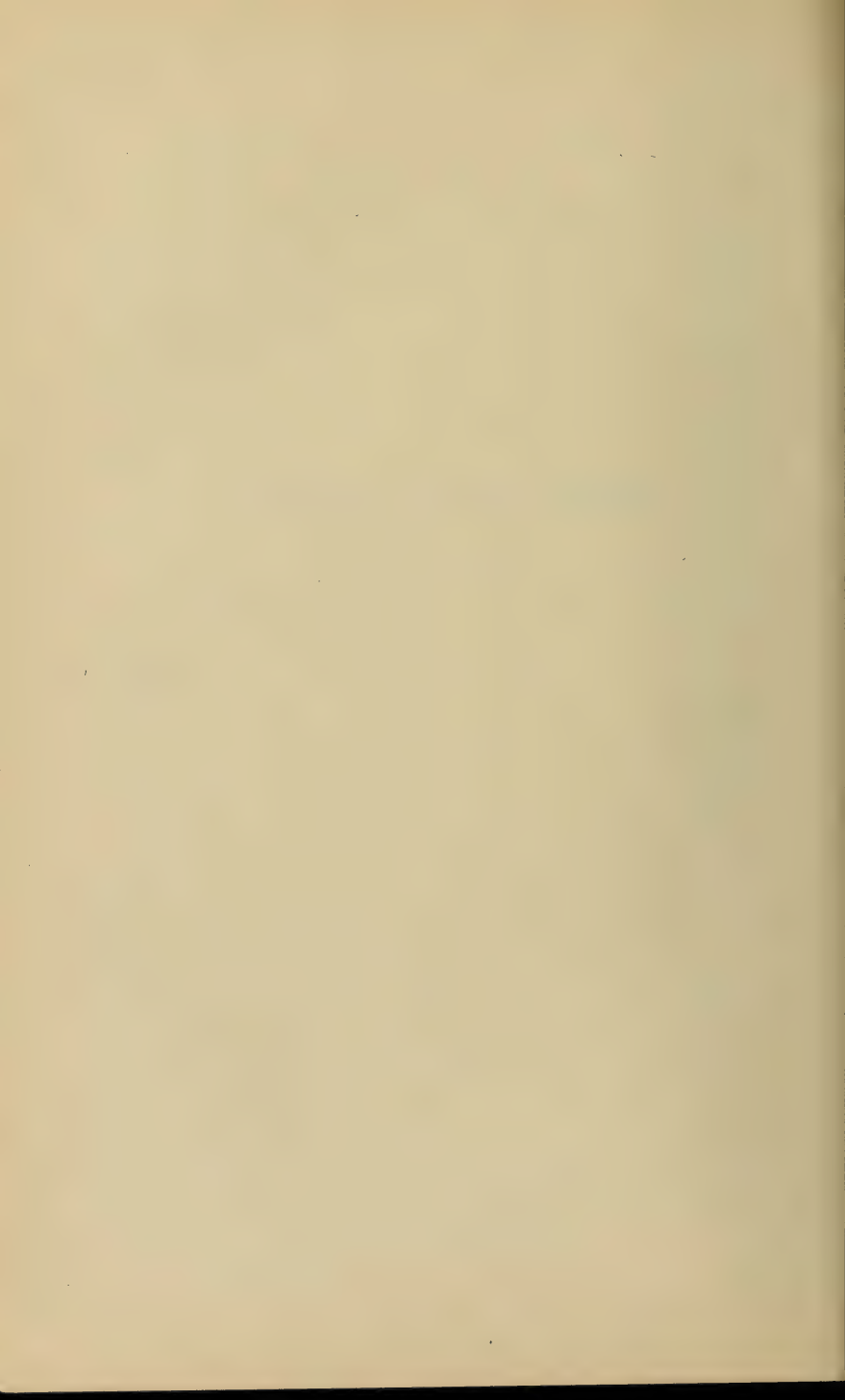
make up my peace: to *be* what God pleases, though poor and lame, and blind; to *do*, though hungry and bare, my daily duties, without distrust; and to *have a good religious heart*. A baby could have told you this."

The Prophet said, "I came to relieve thee, and am myself blessed by thy richness. I have been up to the seventh heaven, but thou hast seen God." And he fell down and kissed Nathan's feet, calling him wisest, and greatest, and most favored of men.





**EXPERIENCE AS A MINISTER**



## EXPERIENCE AS A MINISTER

WITH SOME ACCOUNT OF HIS EARLY LIFE, AND EDUCATION FOR THE MINISTRY

### PREFACE

The following letter from Mr. Parker to his congregation has been received within a few days. It sufficiently explains itself, and needs no introduction. For the information, however, of those who may not be familiar with the circumstances which gave rise to the other letters which are here printed, it may be well to make the following statements:—

Mr. Parker's health, which had been gradually failing for a year or two previous, during the year 1858 became so much impaired as to excite the serious apprehensions of his friends. He continued, however, though suffering from much illness, to preach regularly at the Music Hall — with two intermissions, of several weeks each, when positively unable to officiate — up to the 2nd of January last, when he delivered a discourse entitled "What Religion may do for a Man, a Sermon for the New Year," which has since been given to the public.

On the following Sunday the congregation assembled as usual, expecting to listen to their minister. He did not appear, but sent the following note, which was read to the audience:—

Sunday Morning, Jan. 9, 1859.

TO THE CONGREGATION AT THE MUSIC HALL

WELL-BELOVED AND LONG-TRIED FRIENDS,— I shall not speak to you to-day; for this morning, a little after

four o'clock, I had a slight attack of bleeding in the lungs or throat. I intended to preach on "The Religion of Jesus and the Christianity of the Church, or the Superiority of Good Will to Man over Theological Fancies."

I hope you will not forget the contribution for the poor, whom we have with us always. I don't know when I shall again look upon your welcome faces, which have so often cheered my spirit when my flesh was weak.

May we do justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with our God, and His blessing will be upon us here and hereafter, for His infinite love is with us for ever and ever.

Faithfully your friend,

THEODORE PARKER.

The sensation of grief excited by the reading of this note as general and profound. Very many eyes were dimmed with tears, for although the withdrawal of Mr. Parker from his public ministrations had not been altogether unanticipated by those who had been aware of his feeble state of health for some time previous, yet it had been hoped that no trouble so serious as that announced in the note would arise.

After the reading of the note, a meeting of the parish was held, at which, after remarks by several gentlemen, it was voted to continue the salary of Mr. Parker for one year, at least, with the understanding that he would take a respite from all public duties for that period, or longer. A vote expressive of the deep and heartfelt sympathy of the society with their minister was also unanimously passed.

Mr. Parker was advised by his physicians to leave as soon as possible for the West Indies; and accord-



ingly, after arranging his affairs as if he were not to return again, he left Boston for Santa Cruz on the 3rd of February. Previous to his departure he wrote a brief farewell letter to his congregation, on the 27th of January, which was published at the end of the New Year's Sermon, and is now reprinted here.

Meanwhile the letter from the congregation to their minister, bearing the date of January 11th, was prepared, and read at a meeting of the standing committee of the society and many others of Mr. Parker's friends, held on that day; and at that time, and within a few days subsequent, was signed by about 300 members of the society. This number of signatures might easily have been increased tenfold had it been generally known that such a letter had been written; but owing to the critical condition of Mr. Parker's health, it was deemed advisable to use special precaution to keep it from his knowledge, and therefore no public notice of the letter was given, and the signatures attached to it were privately obtained from such persons as were most easily accessible. For the same reason it was not considered prudent to apprise Mr. Parker of the letter previous to his leaving Boston, and it was not until the 6th of March that he received it at Santa Cruz.

The whole correspondence is now published for the members of the society, and all others whom it may interest.

Boston, June 10, 1859.

## FAREWELL LETTER

TO THE MEMBERS OF THE TWENTY-EIGHTH CONGREGATIONAL SOCIETY IN BOSTON

MUCH VALUED FRIENDS,— When I first found myself unable to speak to you again, and medical men bade me be silent, and flee off for my life to a more genial clime, I determined, before I went, to make ready and publish my New Year's Sermon, the last I ever preached; and the one which was to follow it, the last I ever wrote, lying there yet unspoken; and also to prepare a letter to you, reviewing our past intercourse of now nearly fifteen years.

The phonographer's swift pen made the first work easy, and the last sermon lies printed before you; the next I soon laid aside, reserving my forces for the last. But, alas! the thought, and still more the emotion requisite for such a letter, under such circumstances, are quite too much for me now. So, with much regret, I find myself compelled by necessity to forego the attempt; nay, rather, I trust, only to postpone it for a few weeks.

Now, I can but write this note in parting, to thank you for the patience with which you have heard me so long; for the open-handed generosity which has provided for my unexpected needs; for the continued affection which so many of you have always shown me, and now more tenderly than ever; and yet, above all, for the joy it has given me to see the great ideas and emotions of true religion spring up in your fields with such signs of promise. If my labors were to end to-day, I should still say, "Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace," for I think few men have seen

larger results follow such labors, and so brief. But I shall not think our connection is ended, or likely soon to be: I hope yet to look in your eyes again, and speak to your hearts. So far as my recovery depends on me, be assured, dear friends, I shall leave nothing undone to effect it; and, so far as it is beyond human control, certainly you and I can trust the Infinite Parent of us all, without whose beneficent providence not even a sparrow falls to the ground; living here or in heaven, we are all equally the children of that unbounded love.

It has given me great pain that I could not be with such of you as have lately suffered bereavements and other affliction, and at least speak words of endearment and sympathy when words of consolation would not suffice.

I know not how long we shall be separated, but, while thankful for our past relations, I shall still fervently pray for your welfare and progress in true religion, both as a society, and as individual men and women. I know you will still think only too kindly of

Your minister and friend,

THEODORE PARKER.

Exeter Place, Jan. 27, 1859.

#### LETTER TO MR. PARKER

THE MEMBERS OF THE TWENTY-EIGHTH CONGREGATIONAL SOCIETY OF BOSTON TO THEIR  
BELOVED MINISTER

DEAR SIR,—It is now many years since you came, at the request of some of us, to preach in this city. A few men and women, acting under the impulse of

a deep religious need, which the churches of Boston at that time failed to satisfy, sought to establish a pulpit which should teach a higher idea of religion than yet prevailed, and wherein the largest freedom of thought and speech should be allowed and respected. They asked you to come and stand in such a pulpit, thinking that you would meet their demand, and resolving that you should "have a chance to be heard in Boston"—a chance which other men were not willing to allow. At their earnest solicitation you came, and the result has shown that they were not mistaken in their choice.

On the formal organization of the society, when you were installed as its minister, on the 4th of January, 1846, you preached a sermon of "The True Idea of a Christian Church." How well and faithfully you have labored from that time till now to make that idea a fact, and to build up such a church, we all know. From Sunday to Sunday, year after year—with rare exceptions, when other duties or necessities compelled your absence—you have been at your post, and have always discharged the great functions of your office in a manner which has left nothing to be desired on your part—avoiding no responsibility, neglecting no trust, leaving no duty undone, but working with an ability, energy, perseverance, and self-sacrifice, of which it is not, perhaps, becoming in us to speak at length in this place, but which we cannot the less admire and approve. Outside of the pulpit, we have always found you equally faithful to your responsibilities and duties in all the various relations of life.

Nor have your labors and your example been in vain. You have taught us to discern between the

traditions of men and the living realities of religion; you have brought home to our consciousness great truths of the intellect, the conscience, the heart, and the soul; you have shown us the infinite perfection of God, and the greatness of human nature, inspired us with a higher reverence for Him, a deeper trust in His universal providence, with a larger faith also in man and his capabilities. You have encouraged us to oppose all manner of wickedness and oppression, to welcome every virtue and humanity, to engage in all good works and noble reforms. From the experience of mankind, of nations, and of individuals, you have drawn great lessons of truth and wisdom for our warning or guidance. Above all, your own noble and manly and Christian life has been to us a perpetual sermon, fuller of wisdom and beauty, more eloquent and instructive, even, than the lessons which have fallen from your lips.

In all our intercourse with you, you have ever been to us as a teacher, a friend, and brother, and have never assumed to be our master. You have respected and encouraged in us that free individuality of thought in matters of religion, and all other matters, which you have claimed for yourself; you have never imposed on us your opinions, asking us to accept them because they were yours, but you have always warned us to use a wise discretion, and decide according to our own judgment and conscience, not according to yours. You have not sought to build up a sect, but a free Christian community.

You have indeed been a minister to us, and we feel that your ministry has been for our good; that through it we are better prepared to successfully resist those temptations and to overcome those evils by which we



are surrounded in life, to discharge those obligations which devolve upon us as men aiming to be Christians, and to acquit ourselves as we ought.

As we have gathered together from Sunday to Sunday, as we have looked into your face, and your words have touched our sympathies, and stirred within us our deepest and best emotions, as we have come to know you better year by year, and to appreciate more fully the service which you have been doing for us and for other men, and the faithfulness with which you have labored in it, we have felt that ours was indeed a blessed privilege; and we have indulged a hope that our lives might testify to the good influence of your teachings — a hope which we humbly trust has to some extent, at least, been realized. If we have failed to approximate that high ideal of excellence which you have always set before us, the blame is our own, and not yours.

The world has called us hard names, but it is on you that have fallen the hatred, the intolerance, the insults, and calumnies of men calling themselves Christian. Alas! that they should be so wanting in the first principles of that religion which Christ taught and lived, and which they pretend to honor and uphold. Of those who have opposed us, many have done so through ignorance, misled by the false representations of others; some from conscientious motives; others from selfishness in many forms. Time has already done much to correct this evil with many; it will do more to correct it with others. While the little we may have sacrificed on our part has been as nothing in comparison with all we have gained, from our connection with you, as members of this society, on yours the sacrifice has been great indeed — not, how-

ever, without its recompense to you also, we hope and trust.

For all that you have been to us, for all that you have done, and borne, and forborne, in our behalf, we thank you kindly, cordially, and affectionately. We feel that we owe you such gratitude as no words of ours can express. If we have not shown it in the past by conforming our lives to that high standard of morality and piety which you have exemplified in your own, let us at least try to do so in the future.

We cannot but feel a just pride in the success of this church; that in spite of all obstacles, it has strengthened and increased from year to year, and that the circle of its influence has continually widened. Thousands of earnest men and women in this and other lands, who do not gather with us from week to week, look to this church as their "city of refuge;" their sympathies, their convictions, and their hopes coincide with our own; they are of us, though not with us. Most of them have never listened to your voice, nor looked upon your face, but the noble words which you have uttered are dear to their hearts, and they also bless God for the service which you have done for them.

In all your labors for us and for others, we have only one thing to regret, and that is, that you have not spared yourself, but have sacrificed your health and strength to an extent which, of late, has excited our deepest solicitude and apprehension. We thank God that he furnished you with a vigorous constitution, which has stood the test of so many years of incessant and unwearied toil in so many departments of usefulness, and which has enabled you to accomplish so much as you have already done; but there is

a limit to the endurance of even the strongest man, and the frequent warnings which you have received within the past year or two would seem to indicate that nature will not suffer even the best of her children to transgress the great laws which she has established for their observance, without inflicting the penalty of disobedience, even though they are engaged in the highest and holiest service which man can render unto man. We would not presume to instruct you in this matter; we only repeat what you have yourself often taught us.

A warning now comes of so imperative a nature that it cannot be disregarded.

We need not assure you that the note from you which was read at the Music Hall on Sunday morning last, was listened to by us with the most sincere and heartfelt sorrow — sorrow, however, not unmingled with hope. While we feel the deepest and warmest sympathy for you under the new and serious development of the disease from which you are suffering, we yet trust that it is not too late to arrest its progress, and that, in some more genial clime than ours, relieved from the cares and responsibilities which have borne heavily upon you for so many years, you may regain that soundness of health which shall enable you to resume, at some future day, the great work to which you have devoted your life.

We know with how much reluctance it is that you feel compelled to suspend your labor among us at this time; but there is the less cause for regret on your part, inasmuch as you have, by the services you have already rendered to mankind, far more than earned the right to do so, even if the necessity did not exist.

Whether it is for a longer or a shorter period that

you will be separated from us, of course none of us can tell. In any event, God's will be done! and at all times, wherever you may be, you will have our deepest veneration and regard.

Waiting for that happier day when we shall again take you by the hand, and again listen to your welcome voice, we remain,

Your faithful and loving friends,

(In behalf of the Twenty-eighth Congregational Society),

SAMUEL MAY,

JOHN FLINT,

MARY MAY,

WILLIAM DALL,

THOMAS GODDARD,

JOHN R. MANLEY,

FRANCIS JACKSON, And three hundred others.

Boston, Jan. 11, 1859.

#### REPLY OF MR. PARKER

Fredericksted, Santa Cruz, May 9, 1859.

To Samuel May, Mary May, Thomas Goddard, Francis Jackson, John Flint, William Dall, John R. Manley, and the other signers of the letter to me, dated Boston, Jan. 11, 1859.

DEAR FRIENDS,—Your genial and most welcome letter was handed to me at this place the 6th of March; I had not strength before to bear the excitement it must occasion. It was Sunday morning; and while you were at the Music Hall, I read it in this little far-off island, with emotions you may imagine easier than I can relate. It brought back the times of trial we have had together, and your many kindnesses to me. I can easily bear to be opposed, and that with the greatest amount of abuse; for habit makes all things familiar. I fear it flatters my pride a little,

to be greatly underrated; but to be appreciated so tenderly by your affection, and rated so much above my own deservings, it makes me ashamed that I am no more worthy of your esteem and praise:

“I’ve heard of hearts unkind, kind deeds  
With coldness still returning;  
Alas! the gratitude of men  
Hath oftener left me mourning!”

Herewith I send you, and all the members of the society, a long letter, reviewing my life, and especially my connection with you. I began to compose it before I knew of your letter to me, before I left Boston, indeed, in sleepless nights; but wrote nothing till I was fixed in this place, and then only little by little, as I had strength for the work. I finished it April 19th, and so date it that day. The fair copy sent you is made by my wife and Miss Stevenson, and of course was finished much later. I have had no safe opportunity of sending it direct to you till now, when Miss Thacher, one of our townswomen, returning hence to Boston, kindly offers to take charge of it. If this copy does not reach you I shall forward another from Europe.

The letter would have been quite different, no doubt, in plan and execution, better, I hope, in thought and language, had I been sound and well; for all a sick man’s work seems likely to be infected with his illness. I beg you to forgive its imperfections, and be as gentle in your judgment as fairness will allow.

Though I have been reasonably industrious all my life, when I come to look over what I have actually done, it seems very little in comparison with the opportunities I have had; only the beginning of what



I intended to accomplish. But it is idle to make excuses now, and not profitable to complain.

As that letter is intended for all the members of the Twenty-eighth Congregational Society, I beg you to transit it to the Standing Committee — I know not their names — who will lay it before them in some suitable manner.

With thanks for the past, and hearty good wishes for your future welfare, believe me,

Faithfully your minister and friend,

THEODORE PARKER.

Fredericksted, Santa Cruz, May 9, 1859.

TO THE STANDING COMMITTEE OF THE TWENTY-EIGHTH  
CONGREGATIONAL SOCIETY IN BOSTON

GENTLEMEN AND LADIES,— Here is a letter addressed to the members of your society. I beg you to lay it before them in such a manner as you may see most fit. Believe me,

Faithfully your minister and friend,

THEODORE PARKER.

LETTER

TO THE MEMBERS OF THE TWENTY-EIGHTH CONGREGA-  
TIONAL SOCIETY OF BOSTON

MY DEAR AND VALUED FRIENDS,— After it became needful that I should be silent, and flee off from my home, I determined, at least, before I went, to write you a letter touching our long connection, and my efforts in your service, and so bid you farewell. But the experienced doctors and other wise friends forbade the undertaking, and directed me to wait for a more favorable

time, when the work might be more leisurely and better done, with less risk also to my life; promising indeed a time when it would not diminish the chances of recovery. In the twenty-four days which came between the sudden, decisive attack, and my departure from Boston, there was little time for even a sound, well man to settle and arrange his worldly affairs, to straighten out complicated matters, and return thanks to the many that have befriended him in the difficult emergencies of life—for surely I left home as one not to set eyes on New England again. Since then there has been no time till now when I have had strength to endure the intellectual labor, and still more the emotional agitation, which must attend such a review of my past life. Consumption, having long since slain almost all my near kinsfolk, horsed on the north wind, rode at me also, seeking my life. Swiftly I fled hither, hoping in this little quiet and fair-skied Island of the Holy Cross to hide me from his monstrous sight, to pull his arrows from my flesh, and heal my wounded side. It is yet too soon to conjecture how or when my exile shall end; but at home, wise, friendly, and hopeful doctors told me I had “but one chance in ten” for complete recovery, though more for a partial restoration to some small show of health, I suppose, and power of moderate work. But if the danger be as they say, I do not despair nor lose heart at such odds, having often in my life contended against much greater, and come off triumphant, though the chances against me were a hundred or a thousand to one. Besides, this is now the third time that I remember friends and doctors despairing of my life. Still, I know that I am no longer young, and that I stand up to my shoulders in my grave, whose uncertain sides at any

moment may cave in and bury me with their resistless weight. Yet I hope to climb out this side, and live and work again amid laborious New England men; for, though the flesh be weak and the spirit resigned to either fate, yet still the will to live, though reverent and submissive, is exceeding strong, more vehement than ever before, as I have still much to do — some things to begin upon, and many more lying now half done, that I alone can finish — and I should not like to suffer the little I have done to perish now for lack of a few years' work.

I know well both the despondency of sick men that makes the night seem darker than it is, and also the pleasing illusion which flits before consumptive patients, and while this will-o'-the-wisp comes flickering from their kindred's grave, they think it is the breaking of a new and more auspicious day. So indeed it is, the dayspring from on high, revealing the white, tall porches of eternity. Let you and me be neither cheated by delusive hopes, nor weakened by unmanly fears, but, looking the facts fairly in the face, let us meet the inevitable with calmness and pious joy, singing the wealthy psalm of life: —

“Give to the winds thy fears;  
 Hope and be undismayed!  
 God hears thy sighs and counts thy tears,  
 God shall lift up thy head!

Though comprehended not,  
 Yet Earth and Heaven tell,  
 He sits a Father on the throne;  
 God guideth all things well!”

But while my strength is but weakness, and my time for this letter so uncertain, I will waste neither in a lengthened introduction, knowing “it were a foolish

thing to make a long prologue, and be short in the story itself."

In this letter I must needs speak much of myself, and tell some things which seem to belong only to my private history; for without a knowledge of them, my public conduct might appear other than it really is. Yet I would gladly defer them to a more fitting place, in some brief autobiography to be published after my death; but I am not certain of time to prepare that, so shall here, in small compass, briefly sketch out some small personal particulars which might elsewhere be presented in their full proportions, and with appropriate light and shade. As this letter is confidential and addressed to you, I could wish it might be read only to the members of the Twenty-eighth Congregational Society, or printed solely for their affection, not also published for the eye of the world; but that were impossible, for what is offered to the hearts of so many, thereby becomes accessible to the eyes and ears of all who wish to see and hear; so what I write private to you, becomes public also for mankind, whether I will or not.

In my early boyhood I *felt* I was to be a minister, and looked forward with eager longings for the work to which I still think my nature itself an "effectual call," certainly a deep one and a continuous. Few men have ever been more fortunate than I in having pains judiciously taken with their intellectual culture.

My early education was not costly, as men count expense by dollars; it was exceeding precious, as they might reckon outlay by the fitness of the process to secure a development of natural powers. By father and mother, yes, even by brothers and sisters, great

and unceasing care was taken to secure power of observation, that the senses might grasp their natural objects; of voluntary attention, fixed, continuous, and exact, which, despite of appearances, sees the fact just as it is, no more, no less; of memory, that holds all things firm as gravitation, and yet, like that, keeps them unmixed, not confusing the most delicate outline, and reproduces them at will, complete in the whole, and perfect in each part; much stress was also laid on judgment and inventive imagination. It was a great game they set me to play; it was also an advantage that the counters cost little money, but were common things, picked up daily on a farm, in a kitchen, or a mechanic's thoughtful shop. But still more pains were taken with my moral and religious culture. In my earlist boyhood I was taught to respect the instinctive promptings of conscience, regarding it as the "voice of God in the soul of man," which must always be obeyed; to speak the truth without evasion or concealment; to love justice and conform to it; to reverence merit in all men, and that regardless of their rank or reputation; and, above all things, I was taught to love and trust the dear God. He was not presented to me as a great king, with force for His chief quality, but rather as a father, eminent for perfect justice, and complete and perfect love, alike the parent of Jew and Gentile, Christian and non-Christian, dealing with all, not according to the accident of their name and situation, but to the real use each should make of his talents and opportunities, however little or great. I was taught self-reliance, intellectual, moral, and of many another form; to investigate all things with my own eyes; carefully to form opinions for myself, and while I believed them reasonable and just, to hold and



defend them with modest firmness. Inquiry was encouraged in all directions.

Of course I took in many of the absurd theological opinions of the time; but I think few New Englanders born of religious families in the first ten years of this century, were formally taught so little superstition. I have met none with whom more judicious attempts were made to produce a natural unfolding of the religious and moral faculties; I do not speak of results, only of aim and process. I have often been praised for virtues which really belonged to my father and mother, and if they were also mine, they must have come so easy under such training, that I should feel entitled to but small merit for possessing them. They made a careful distinction between a man's character and his creed, and in my hearing never spoke a bigoted or irreverent word.

As my relatives and neighbors were all hard-working people, living in one of the most laborious communities in the world, I did not fail to learn the great lesson of personal industry, and to acquire power of work — to begin early, to continue long, with strong and rapid stroke. The discipline and habit of bodily toil were quite easily transferred to thought, and I learned early to apply my mind with exact, active, and long-continued attention, which outward things did not disturb; so, while working skilfully with my hands, I could yet think on what I would.

Good books by great masters fell into even my boyish hands; the best English authors of prose and verse, the Bible, the Greek and Roman classics — which I at first read mainly in translations, but soon became familiar with in their original beauty; these were my literary helps. What was read at all, was also studied,

and not laid aside till well understood. If my books in boyhood were not many, they were much, and also great.

I had an original fondness for scientific and metaphysical thought, which found happy encouragement in my early days; my father's strong, discriminating, and comprehensive mind also inclining that way, offered me an excellent help. Nature was all about me; my attention was wisely directed to both use and beauty, and I early became familiar with the flora of New England, and attentive also to the habits of beast and bird, insect, reptile, fish. A few scientific works on natural history gave me their stimulus and their help.<sup>1</sup>

After my general preliminary education was pretty well advanced, the hour came when I must decide on my profession for life. All about me there were ministers who had sufficient talents; now and then one admirably endowed with learning; devout and humane men, also, with no stain on their personal character. But I did not see much in their clerical profession to attract me thither; the notorious dulness of the Sunday services, their mechanical character, the poverty and insignificance of the sermons, the unnaturalness and uncertainty of the doctrines preached on the authority of a "divine and infallible revelation," the lifelessness of the public prayers, and the consequent heedlessness of the congregation, all tended to turn a young man off from becoming a minister. Besides, it did not appear that the New England clergy were leaders in the intellectual, moral, or religious progress of the people; if they tried to seem so, it was only the appearance which was kept up. "Do you think our minister would dare tell his audience of their actual faults?"

— so a rough blacksmith once asked me in my youth. “Certainly I do!” was the boyish answer. “Humph!” rejoined the smith, “I should like to have him begin, then!” The genius of Emerson soon moved from the clerical constellation, and stood forth alone, a fixed and solitary star. Dr. Channing was the only man in the New England pulpit who to me seemed great. All my friends advised me against the ministry — it was “a narrow place, affording no opportunity to do much!” I thought it a wide place.

The legal profession seemed to have many attractions. There were eminent men in its ranks, rising to public honors, judicial or political; they seemed to have more freedom and individuality than the ministers. For some time I hesitated, inclined that way, and made preliminary studies in the law. But at length the perils of that profession seemed greater than I cared to rush upon. Mistaking sound for sense, I thought the lawyer’s moral tone was lower than the minister’s, and dared not put myself under that temptation I prayed God not to lead me into. I could not make up my mind to defend a cause I knew to be wrong, using all my efforts to lead judge or jury to a decision I thought unjust. A powerful and successful practitioner told me “none could be a lawyer without doing so,” and quoted the well-known words of Lord Brougham. I saw men of large talents yielding to this temptation, and counting as great success what to me even then seemed only great ruin. I could not decide to set up a law-mill beside the public road, to put my hand on the winch, and by turning one way, rob innocent men of their property, liberty, life; or, by reversing the motion, withdraw the guilty from just punishment, pecuniary or corporeal. Though I

hesitated some time, soon as I got clearness of sight, I returned to my first love, for that seemed free from guile. I then asked myself these three questions: —

1. "Can you seek for what is eternally true, and not be blinded by the opinions of any sect, or of the Christian Church; and can you tell that truth you learn, even when it is unpopular and hated?" I answered, "*I can!*" Rash youth is ever confident.

2. "Can you seek the eternal right, and not be blinded by the statutes and customs of men, ecclesiastical, political, and social; and can you declare that eternal right you discover, applying it to the actual life of man, individual and associated, though it bring you into painful relations with men?" Again I swiftly answered, "*I can.*"

3. "Can you represent in your life that truth of the intellect and that right of the conscience, and so not disgrace with your character what you preach with your lips?" I doubted of this more than the others; the temptation to personal wickedness seemed stronger than that to professional deceit — at least it was then better known; but I answered, "*I can try, and will!*"

Alas! I little knew all that was involved in these three questions, and their prompt, youthful answers. I understand it better now.

So I determined to become a minister, hoping to help mankind in the most important of all human concerns, the development of man's highest powers.

Zealously I entered on my theological education, with many ill-defined doubts, and some distinct denials, of the chief doctrines of the ecclesiastical theology of Christendom.

1. In my early childhood, after a severe but silent



struggle, I made way with the ghastly doctrine of eternal damnation and a wrathful God; this is the Goliath of that theology. From my seventh year I have had no fear of God, only an ever-greatening love and trust.

2. The doctrine of the Trinity, the "great mystery of Revelation," had long since gone the same road. For a year, though born and bred among Unitarians, I had attended the preachings of Dr. Lyman Beecher, the most powerful orthodox minister in New England, then in the full blaze of his talents and reputation, and stirred also with polemic zeal against "Unitarians, Universalists, Papists, and Infidels." I went through one of his "protracted meetings," listening to the fiery words of excited men, and hearing the most frightful doctrines set forth in sermon, song, and prayer. I greatly respected the talents, the zeal, and the enterprise of that able man, who certainly taught me much, but I came away with no confidence in his theology; the better I understood it, the more self-contradictory, unnatural, and hateful did it seem. A year of his preaching about finished all my respect for the Calvinistic scheme of theology.<sup>2</sup>

3. I had found no evidence which to me could authorize a belief in the supernatural birth of Jesus of Nazareth. The twofold Biblical testimony was all; that was contradictory and good for nothing; we had not the affidavit of the mother, the only competent human witness, nor even the declaration of the son; there was no circumstantial evidence to confirm the statement in the Gospels of a most improbable event.

4. Many miracles related in the Old and New Testament seemed incredible to me; some were clearly impossible, others ridiculous, and a few were wicked; such, of course, I rejected at once, while I still arbi-



trarily admitted others. The general question of miracles was one which gave me much uneasiness, for I had not learned carefully to examine evidence for alleged historical events, and had, besides, no clear conception of what is involved in the notion that God ever violates the else constant mode of operation of the universe. Of course I had not then that philosophical idea of God which makes a theological miracle as impossible as a round triangle, or any other self-evident contradiction.

5. I had no belief in the plenary, infallible, verbal inspiration of the whole Bible, and strong doubts as to the miraculous inspiration of any part of it. Some things were the opposite of divine; I could not put my finger on any great moral or religious truth taught by revelation in the New Testament, which had not previously been set forth by men for whom no miraculous help was ever claimed. But, on the whole matter of inspiration, I lacked clear and definite ideas, and found neither friend nor book to help me.

In due time I entered the Theological School at Cambridge, then under the charge of the Unitarians, or "Liberal Christians." I found excellent opportunities for study: there were able and earnest professors, who laid no yoke on any neck, but left each man free to think for himself, and come to such conclusions as he must. Telling what they thought they knew, they never pretended they had learned all that may be known, or winnowed out all error from their creed. They were honest guides, with no more sophistry than is perhaps almost universal in that calling, and did not pretend to be masters.<sup>3</sup> There, too, was a large library containing much valuable ancient lore,

though, alas! almost none of the new theologic thought of the German masters. Besides, there was leisure, and unbounded freedom of research; and I could work as many hours in the study as a mechanic in his shop, or a farmer in his field. The pulpits of Boston were within an easy walk, and Dr. Channing drew near the zenith of his power.

Here, under these influences, I pursued the usual routine of theological reading, but yet, of course, had my own private studies, suited to my special wants. It is now easy to tell what I then attempted without always being conscious of my aim, and what results I gradually reached before I settled in the ministry.

I. I studied the Bible with much care. First, I wished to learn, What is the Bible — what books and words compose it? this is the question of criticism; next, What does the Bible mean — what sentiments and ideas do its words contain? this is the question of interpretation. I read the Bible critically, in its original tongues, the most important parts of it also in the early versions, and sought for the meaning early attributed to its words, and so studied the works of Jewish rabbis on the Old Testament, and of the early Christian Fathers on both New and Old; besides, I studied carefully the latest critics and interpreters, especially the German.

I soon found that the Bible is a collection of quite heterogeneous books, most of them anonymous, or bearing names of doubtful authors, collected none knows how, or when, or by whom; united more by caprice than any philosophic or historic method, so that it is not easy to see why one ancient book is kept in the canon and another kept out. I found no unity

of doctrine in the several parts; the Old Testament "reveals" one form of religion, and the New Testament one directly its opposite; and in the New Testament itself, I found each writer had his own individuality, which appears not only in the style, the form of thought, but quite as much in the doctrines, the substance of thought, where no two are well agreed.

Connected with this Biblical study, came the question of inspiration and of miracles. I still inconsistently believed, or half believed, in the direct miraculous interposition of God, from time to time, to set things right which else went wrong, though I found no historic or philosophic reason for limiting it to the affairs of Jews and Christians, or the early ages of the Church. The whole matter of miracles was still a puzzle to me, and for a long time a source of anxiety; for I had not studied the principles of historic evidence, nor learned to identify and scrutinize the witnesses. But the problem of inspiration got sooner solved. I believed in the immanence of God in man, as well as matter, His activity in both; hence, that all men are inspired in proportion to their actual powers, and their normal use thereof; that truth is the test of intellectual inspiration, justice of moral, and so on. I did not find the Bible inspired, except in this general way, and in proportion to the truth and justice therein. It seemed to me that no part of the Old Testament or New could be called the "Word of God," save in the sense that all truth is God's word.

II. I studied the historical development of religion and theology amongst Jews and Christians, and saw the gradual formation of the great ecclesiastical doctrines which so domineered over the world. As I found the Bible was the work of men, so I also found that

the Christian Church was no more divine than the British State, a Dutchman's shop, or an Austrian's farm. The miraculous, infallible Bible, and the miraculous, infallible Church, disappeared when they were closely looked at; and I found the fact of history quite different from the pretension of theology.

III. I studied the historical development of religion and theology amongst the nations not Jewish or Christian, and attended as well as I then could to the four other great religious sects — the Brahmanic, the Buddhistic, the Classic, and the Mahometan. As far as possible at that time, I studied the sacred books of mankind in their original tongues, and with the help of the most faithful interpreters. Here the Greek and Roman poets and philosophers came in for their place, there being no sacred books of the classic nations. I attended pretty carefully to the religion of savages and barbarians, and was thereby helped to the solution of many a difficult problem. I found no tribe of men destitute of religion who had attained power of articulate speech.

IV. I studied assiduously the metaphysics and psychology of religion. Religious consciousness was universal in human history. Was it then natural to man, inseparable from his essence, and so from his development? In my own consciousness I found it automatic and indispensable; was it really so likewise in the human race? The authority of Bibles and Churches was no answer to that question. I tried to make an analysis of humanity, and see if by psychological science I could detect the special element which produced religious consciousness in me, and religious phenomena in mankind — seeking a cause adequate to the facts of experience and observation.



The common books of philosophy seemed quite insufficient; the sensational system so ably presented by Locke in his masterly Essay, developed into various forms by Hobbes, Berkeley, Hume, Paley, and the French Materialists, and modified, but not much mended, by Reid and Stewart, gave little help; it could not legitimate my own religious instincts, nor explain the religious history of mankind, or even of the British people, to whom that philosophy is still so manifold a hindrance. Ecclesiastical writers, though able as Clarke and Butler, and learned also as Cudworth and Barrow, could not solve the difficulty; for the principle of authority, though more or less concealed, yet lay there, and, like buried iron, disturbed the free action of their magnetic genius, affecting its dip and inclination. The brilliant mosaic, which Cousin set before the world, was of great service, but not satisfactory. I found most help in the works of Immanuel Kant, one of the profoundest thinkers in the world, though one of the worst writers, even of Germany; if he did not always furnish conclusions I could rest in, he yet gave me the true method, and put me on the right road.

I found certain great primal intuitions of human nature, which depend on no logical process of demonstration, but are rather facts of consciousness given by the instinctive action of human nature itself. I will mention only the three most important which pertain to religion.

1. The instinctive intuition of the divine, the consciousness that there is a God.

2. The instinctive intuition of the just and right, a consciousness that there is a moral law, independent of our will, which we ought to keep.

3. The instinctive intuition of the immortal, a con-



sciousness that the essential element of man, the principle of individuality, never dies.

Here, then, was the foundation of religion, laid in human nature itself, which neither the atheist nor the more pernicious bigot, with their sophisms of denial or affirmation, could move, or even shake. I had gone through the great spiritual trial of my life, telling no one of its hopes or fears; and I thought it a triumph that I had psychologically established these three things to my own satisfaction, and devised a scheme which to the scholar's mind, I thought, could legitimate what was spontaneously given to all, by the great primal instincts of mankind.

Then I proceeded to develop the contents of these instinctive intuitions of the divine, the just, and the immortal, and see what God actually is, what morality is, and what eternal life has to offer. In each case I pursued two methods — the inductive and deductive.

First, from the history of mankind — savage, barbarous, civilized, enlightened — I gathered the most significant facts I could find relating to men's opinions about God, morality, heaven, and hell, and thence made such generalizations as the facts would warrant, which, however, were seldom satisfactory; for they did not represent facts of the universe, the actual God, justice, and eternal life, but only what men had thought or felt thereof; yet this comparative and inductive theology was of great value to me.

Next, from the primitive facts of consciousness, given by the power of instinctive intuition, I endeavored to deduce the true notion of God, of justice, and futurity. Here I could draw from human nature, and not be hindered by the limitations of human history; but I know now better than it was possible then, how

difficult is this work, and how often the inquirer mistakes his own subjective imagination for a fact of the universe. It is for others to decide whether I have sometimes mistaken a little grain of brilliant dust in my telescope for a fixed star in heaven.

To learn what I could about the spiritual faculties of man, I not only studied the sacred books of various nations, the poets and the philosophers who professedly treat thereof, but also such as deal with sleep-walking, dreams, visions, prophecies, second-sight, oracles, ecstasies, witch-craft, magic, wonders, the appearance of devils, ghosts, and the like. Besides, I studied other works which lie out from the regular highway of theology, the spurious books attributed to famous Jews or Christians, the pseudepigraphy of the Old Testament, and the Apocrypha of the New, with the strange fantasies of the Neoplatonists and Gnostics. I did not neglect the writings of the Mystics, though at that time I could only make a beginning with the more famous or most tenderly religious; I was much attracted to this class of men, who developed the element of piety, regardless of the theologic ritualism of the Church, the philosophic discipline of the schools, or the practical morality of common life. By this process, I not only learned much of the abnormal action of the human spirit, and saw how often a mere fancy passes for fact, and a dreamer's subjective whim bestrides some great harbor of the world for a thousand years, obstructing all tall ships, until an earthquake throws it down; but I also gleaned up many a precious flower which bloomed unseen in those waste places of literature, and was unknown to the authorized florists of the school or Church.

I left the Theological School with reluctance, conscious of knowing so little of what I must presently teach, and wishing more years for research and thought. Of course my first sermons were only imitations; and even if the thought might, perhaps, be original, the form was old, the stereotype of the pulpit. I preached with fear and trembling, and wondered that old and mature persons, rich in the experience of life, should listen to a young man, who might, indeed, have read and thought, but yet had had no time to live much and know things by heart. I took all possible pains with the matter of the discourse, and always appealed to the religious instinct in mankind. At the beginning I resolved to preach the natural laws of man as they are writ in his constitution, no less and no more. After preaching a few months in various places, and feeling my way into the consciousness of men, I determined to preach nothing as religion which I had not experienced inwardly, and made my own, knowing it by heart. Thus, not only the intellectual, but also the religious part of my sermons would rest on facts that I was sure of, and not on the words of another. I was indebted to another young candidate for the hint. I hope I have not been faithless to the early vow. A study of the English State Trials, and a careful analysis of the arguments of the great speeches therein, helped me to clearness of arrangement, and distinctness in the use of terms. Here and in the Greek and Latin orations I got the best part of my rhetorical culture.

On the longest day of 1837, I was ordained minister of the Unitarian Church and Congregation at West Roxbury, a little village near Boston, one of the small-

est societies in New England, where I found men and women whose friendship is still dear and instructive. I had thought freely, and freely preached what I thought; none had ever questioned my right. At the Theological School, the professors were then teachers to instruct, not also inquisitors to torture and to damn; satisfied of the religious character of the pupils, they left each to develop his own free spiritual individuality, responsible only to his own conscience and his God. It was then the boast of the little Unitarian party that it respected individuality, freedom of thought, and freedom of speech, and had neither inquisitors nor pope. Great diversity of opinion prevailed amongst Unitarians, ministers and laymen, but the unity of religion was more thought of than the variety of theology. At ordinations, for some years, their councils had ceased to inquire into the special opinions of the candidate, leaving him and the society electing to settle the matter. The first principle of congregationalism certainly requires this course. As a sect, the Unitarians had but one distinctive doctrine — the unity of God without the Trinity of Persons. Christendom said, "Jesus of Nazareth is Jehovah of Hosts!" The Unitarians answered, "He is not!" At my ordination, none of the council offered to catechise me, or wished to interfere with what belonged to me and the congregation, and they probably thought of my piety and morality more than of the special theology which even then rode therewith in the same panniers. The able and earnest ministers who preached the sermon, delivered the charge, and gave me the right hand of fellowship, all recommended study, investigation, originality, freedom of thought and openness of speech, as well as humanity, and a life of personal religious-



ness. One, in his ordaining prayer, his hand on my head, put up the petition, "that no fondness for literature or science, and no favorite studies, may ever lead this young man from learning the true religion, and preaching it for the salvation of mankind!" Most heartily did I say "Amen!" to this supplication.

For the first year or two the congregation did not exceed seventy persons, including the children. I soon became well acquainted with all in the little parish, where I found some men of rare enlightenment, some truly generous and noble souls. I knew the characters of all, and the thoughts of such as had them. I took great pains with the composition of my sermons; they were never out of my mind. I had an intense delight in writing and preaching; but I was a learner quite as much as a teacher, and was feeling my way forward and upward with one hand, while I tried to lead men with the other. I preached natural laws, nothing on the authority of any church, any tradition, any sect, though I sought illustration and confirmation from all these sources. For historical things, I told the historical evidence; for spiritual things, I found ready proof in the primal instincts of the soul, and confirmation in the life of religious men. The simple life of the farmers, mechanics, and milk-men, about me, of its own accord, turned into a sort of poetry, and reappeared in the sermons, as the green woods, not far off, looked in at the windows of the meeting-house. I think I preached only what I had experienced in my own inward consciousness, which widened and grew richer as I came into practical contact with living men, turned time into life, and mere thought became character.



But I had much leisure for my private humanitarian and philosophic studies. One of the professors in the Theological School had advised against my settling "in so small a place," and warned me against "the seductions of an easy-chair," telling me I must become a "minister at large for all mankind," and do with the pen what I could not with the voice. I devoted my spare time to hard study. To work ten or fifteen hours a day in my literary labors, was not only a habit, but a pleasure; with zeal and delight I applied myself anew to the great theological problems of the age.

Many circumstances favored both studious pursuits and the formation of an independent character. The years of my preliminary theological study, and of my early ministry, fell in the most interesting period of New England's spiritual history, when a great revolution went on — so silent that few men knew it was taking place, and none then understood its whither or its whence.

The Unitarians, after a long and bitter controversy, in which they were often shamelessly ill-treated by the "orthodox," had conquered, and secured their ecclesiastical right to deny the Trinity, "the Achilles of dogmas;" they had won the respect of the New England public; had absorbed most of the religious talent of Massachusetts, founded many churches, and possessed and liberally administered the oldest and richest college in America. Not yet petrified into a sect, they rejoiced in the large liberty of "the children of God," and, owning neither racks nor dungeons, did not covet any of those things that were their neighbors'. With less education and literary skill, the Universalists had fought manfully against eternal damnation — the foul-

est doctrine which defiles the pages of man's theologic history — secured their ecclesiastical position, wiping malignant statutes from the law books, and, though in a poor and vulgar way, were popularizing the great truth that God's chief attribute is *love*, which is extended to all men. Alone of all Christian sects, they professedly taught the immortality of man in such a form that it is no curse to the race to find it true. But, though departing from those doctrines which are essential to the Christian ecclesiastic scheme, neither Universalist nor Unitarian had broken with the authority of revelation, the word of the Bible, but still professed a willingness to believe both Trinity and damnation, could they be found in the miraculous and infallible Scripture.

Mr. Garrison, with his friends, inheriting what was best in the Puritan founders of New England, fired with the zeal of the Hebrew prophets and Christian martyrs, while they were animated with a spirit of humanity rarely found in any of the three, was beginning his noble work, but in a style so humble that, after much search, the police of Boston discovered there was nothing dangerous in it, for "his only visible auxiliary was a negro boy." Dr. Channing was in the full maturity of his powers, and after long preaching the dignity of man as an abstraction, and piety as a purely inward life, with rare and winsome eloquence, and ever progressive humanity, began to apply his sublime doctrines to actual life in the individual, the State, and the Church. In the name of Christianity, the great American Unitarian called for the reform of the drunkard, the elevation of the poor, the instruction of the ignorant, and, above all, for the liberation of the American slave. A remarkable man, his instinct

of progress grew stronger the more he traveled and the further he went, for he surrounded himself with young life. Horace Mann, with his coadjutors, began a great movement, to improve the public education of the people. Pierpont, single-handed, was fighting a grand and twofold battle — against drunkenness in the street, and for righteousness in the pulpit — against fearful ecclesiastic odds, maintaining a minister's right and duty to oppose actual wickedness, however popular and destructive. The brilliant genius of Emerson rose in the winter nights, and hung over Boston, drawing the eyes of ingenuous young people to look up to that great, new star, a beauty and a mystery, which charmed for the moment, while it gave also perennial inspiration, as it led them forward along new paths, and toward new hopes. America had seen no such sight before; it is not less a blessed wonder now.

Besides, the phrenologists, so ably represented by Spurzheim and Combe, were weakening the power of the old supernaturalism, leading men to study the constitution of man more wisely than before, and laying the foundation on which many a beneficent structure was soon to rise. The writings of Wordsworth were becoming familiar to the thoughtful lovers of nature and of man, and drawing men to natural piety. Carlyle's works got reprinted at Boston, diffusing a strong, and then, also, a healthy influence on old and young. The writings of Coleridge were reprinted in America, all of them "Aids to Reflection," and brilliant with the scattered sparks of genius; they incited many to think, more especially young Trinitarian ministers; and, spite of the lack of both historic and philosophic accuracy, and the utter absence of all proportion in his writings; spite of his haste, his vanity, prejudice, sophistry, con-

fusion, and opium — he yet did great service in New England, helping to emancipate enthralled minds. The works of Cousin, more systematic, and more profound as a whole, and far more catholic and comprehensive, continental, not insular, in his range, also became familiar to the Americans — reviews and translation going where the eloquent original was not heard — and helped to free the young mind from the gross sensationalism of the academic philosophy on one side, and the grosser supernaturalism of the ecclesiastic theology on the other.

The German language, hitherto the priceless treasure of a few, was becoming well known, and many were thereby made acquainted with the most original, deep, bold, comprehensive, and wealthy literature in the world, full of theologic and philosophic thought. Thus, a great store-house was opened to such as were earnestly in quest of truth. Young Mr. Strauss, in whom genius for criticism was united with extraordinary learning and rare facility of philosophic speech, wrote his "Life of Jesus," where he rigidly scrutinized the genuineness of the Gospels and the authenticity of their contents, and, with scientific calmness, brought every statement to his steady scales, weighing it, not always justly, as I think, but impartially always, with philosophic coolness and deliberation. The most formidable assailant of the ecclesiastical theology of Christendom, he roused a host of foes, whose writings — mainly ill-tempered, insolent, and sophistical — it was yet profitable for a young man to read.

The value of Christian miracles, not the question of fact, was discussed at Boston, as never before in America. Prophecy had been thought the Jachin, and miracles the Boaz, whereon alone Christianity could rest;



but, said some, if both be shaken down, the Lord's house will not fall. The claims of ecclesiastical tradition came up to be settled anew; and young men, walking solitary through the moonlight, asked, "Which is to be permanent master — a single accident in human history, nay, perchance only the whim of some anonymous dreamer, or the substance of human nature, greatening with continual development, and

'Not without access of unexpected strength?'"

The question was also its answer.

The rights of labor were discussed with deep philanthropic feeling, and sometimes with profound thought, metaphysic and economic both. The works of Charles Fourier — a strange, fantastic, visionary man, no doubt, but gifted also with amazing insight of the truths of social science — shed some light in these dark places of speculation. Mr. Ripley, a born democrat, in the high sense of that abused word, and one of the best cultured and most enlightened men in America, made an attempt at Brook Farm in West Roxbury, so to organize society that the results of labor should remain in the workman's hand, and not slip thence to the trader's till; that there should be "no exploitation of man by man," but toil and thought, hard work and high culture, should be united in the same person.

The natural rights of women began to be inquired into, and publicly discussed; while in private, great pains were taken in the chief towns of New England, to furnish a thorough and comprehensive education to such young maidens as were born with two talents, mind and money.

Of course, a strong reaction followed. At the



Cambridge Divinity School, Professor Henry Ware, Jr., told the young men, if there appeared to them any contradiction between the reason of man and the letter of the Bible, they "must follow the written word," "for you can never be so certain of the correctness of what takes place in your own mind, as of what is written in the Bible." In an ordination sermon, he told the young minister not to preach himself, but Christ; and not to appeal to human nature for proof of doctrines, but to the authority of revelation. Other Unitarian ministers declared, "There are limits to free inquiry;" and preached, "Reason must be put down, or she will soon ask terrible questions;" protested against the union of philosophy and religion, and assumed to "prohibit the banns" of marriage between the two. Mr. Norton — then a great name at Cambridge, a scholar of rare but contracted merit, a careful and exact writer, born for controversy, really learned and able in his special department, the interpretation of the New Testament — opened his mouth and spoke: the mass of men must accept the doctrines of religion solely on the authority of the learned, as they do the doctrines of mathematical astronomy; the miracles of Jesus — he made merry at those of the Old Testament — are the only evidence of the truth of Christianity; in the popular religion of the Greeks and Romans, there was no conception of God; the new philosophic attempts to explain the facts of religious consciousness were "the latest form of infidelity;" the great philosophical and theological thinkers of Germany were "all atheists;" "Schleiermacher was an atheist," as was also Spinoza, his master, before him; and Cousin, who was only "that Frenchman," was no better; the study of philosophy,

and the neglect of "Biblical criticism," were leading mankind to ruin; everywhere was instability and insecurity!

Of course, this reaction was supported by the ministers in the great churches of commerce, and by the old literary periodicals, which never knew a star was risen till men wondered at it in the zenith; the Unitarian journals gradually went over to the opponents of freedom and progress, with lofty scorn rejecting their former principles, and repeating the conduct they had once complained of; Cambridge and Princeton seemed to be interchanging cards. From such hands Cousin and Emerson could not receive needed criticism, but only vulgar abuse. Dr. Channing could "not draw a long breath in Boston," where he found the successors of Paul trembling before the successors of Felix. Even Trinitarian Moses Stuart seemed scarcely safe in his hard-bottomed Hopkinsian chair, at Andover. The Trinitarian ministers and city schoolmasters galled Horace Mann with continual assaults on his measures for educating the people. Unitarian ministers struck hands with wealthy liquor dealers to drive Mr. Pierpont from his pulpit, where he valiantly preached "temperance, righteousness, and judgment to come," appealing to "a day after to-day." Prominent anti-slavery men were dropped out of all wealthy society in Boston, their former friends not knowing them in the streets; Mr. Garrison was mobbed by men in handsome coats, and found defense from their fury only in a jail; an assembly of women, consulting for the liberation of their darker sisters, was driven with hootings into the street. The attorney general of Massachusetts brought an indictment for blasphemy against a country minister, one of the most learned

Biblical scholars in America, for publicly proving that none of the "Messianic prophecies" of the "Old Testament" was ever fulfilled by Jesus of Nazareth, who accordingly was not the expected Christ of the Jews. Abner Kneeland, editor of a newspaper, in which he boasted of the name "infidel," was clapped in jail for writing against the ecclesiastical notion of God, the last man ever punished for blasphemy in the State. At the beck of a Virginian slave-holder, the governor of Massachusetts suggested to the legislature the expediency of abridging the old New England liberty of speech.

The movement partly established a new quarterly, the *Dial*, wherein their wisdom and their folly rode together on the same saddle, to the amazement of lookers-on. The short-lived journal had a narrow circulation, but its most significant papers were scattered wide by newspapers which copied them. A *Quarterly Review* was also established by Mr. Brownson, then a Unitarian minister and "sceptical democrat" of the most extravagant class, but now a Catholic, a powerful advocate of material and spiritual despotism, and perhaps the ablest writer in America against the rights of man and the welfare of his race. In this he diffused important philosophic ideas, displayed and disciplined his own extraordinary talents for philosophic thought and popular writings, and directed them towards Democracy, Transcendentalism, "New Views," and the "Progress of the Species."

I count it a piece of good fortune that I was a young man when these things were taking place, when great questions were discussed, and the public had not yet taken sides.

After I became a minister I laid out an extensive plan of study, a continuation of previous work. I intended to write a "History of the Progressive Development of Religion among the leading Races of Mankind," and attended at once to certain preliminaries. I studied the Bible more carefully and comprehensively than before, both the criticism and interpretation; and, in six or seven years, prepared an "Introduction to the Canonical Scriptures of the Old Testament," translated from the German of Dr. De Wette, the ablest writer in the world on that theme; the book as published was partly his and partly mine. This work led me to a careful study of the Christian Fathers of the first five centuries, and of most of the great works written about the Bible and Christianity. I intended to prepare a similar work on the New Testament, and the Apocrypha of both Old and New. I studied the philosophers, theologians, and Biblical critics of Germany, the only land where theology was then studied as a science, and developed with scientific freedom. I was much helped by the large learning and nice analysis of these great thinkers, who have done as much for the history of the Christian movement as Niebuhr for that of the Roman State. But as I studied the profound works of Catholic and Protestant, the regressive and the progressive men, and got instruction from all, I did not feel inclined to accept any one as my master, thinking it lawful to ride on their horses without being myself either saddled or bridled.

The critical study of the Bible only enhanced my reverence for the great and good things I found in the Old Testament and New. They were not the less valuable because they were not the work of "miraculous



and infallible inspiration," and because I found them mixed with some of the worst doctrines ever taught by men; it was no strange thing to find pearls surrounded by sand, and roses beset with thorns. I liked the Bible better when I could consciously take its contradictory books each for what it is, and felt nothing commanding me to accept it for what it is not; and could freely use it as a help, not slavishly serve it as a master, or worship it as an idol. I took no doctrine for true, simply because it was in the Bible; what therein seemed false or wrong, I rejected as freely as if I had found it in the sacred books of the Buddhists or Mormons.

I had not preached long before I found, as never before, that practically, the ecclesiastical worship of the Bible hindered the religious welfare and progress of the Christians more than any other cause.

With doctors, the traditionary drug was once a fetish, which they revered and administered without much inquiring whether it would kill or cure. But now, fortunately, they are divided into so many sects, each terribly criticising the other, the spirit of philosophic scepticism and inquiry by experiment has so entered the profession, that many have broken with that authority, and ask freely, "How can the sick man recover?" The worship of the traditionary drug is getting ended.

With lawyers, the law of the land, custom, or promulgated statute, is also a fetish. They do not ask, "Is the statute right? — will its application promote justice?" which is the common interest of all men; but only, "Is it law?" To this the judge and advocate must prostitute their conscience; hence the personal ruin which so often is mistaken for personal success.

With Protestant ministers, the Bible is a fetish; it is



so with Catholic priests likewise, only to them the Roman Church is the master-fetish, the "big thunder," while the Bible is but an inferior and subservient idol. For ultimate authority, the minister does not appeal to God, manifesting Himself in the world of matter and the world of man, but only to the Bible; to that he prostitutes his mind and conscience, heart and soul; on the authority of an anonymous Hebrew book, he will justify the slaughter of innocent men, women and children, by the thousand; and, on that of an anonymous Greek book, he will believe, or at least command others to believe, that man is born totally depraved, and God will perpetually slaughter men in hell by the million though they had committed no fault, except that of not believing an absurd doctrine they had never heard of. Ministers take the Bible in the lump as divine; all between the lids of the book is equally the "Word of God," infallible and miraculous; he that believeth it shall be saved, and he that believeth not shall be damned; no amount of piety and morality can make up for not believing this. No doctor is ever so subordinate to his drug, no lawyer lies so prone before statute and custom, as the mass of ministers before the Bible, the great fetish of Protestant Christendom. The Ephesians did not so worship their great goddess Diana and the meteoric stone which fell down from Jupiter. "We can believe anything," say they, "which has a 'Thus saith the Lord' before or after it." The Bible is not only master of the soul, it is also a talisman to keep men from harm; bodily contact with it, through hand or eye, is a part of religion; so it lies in railroad stations, in the parlors and sleeping chambers of taverns, and the cabins of ships, only to be seen and touched, not read. The pious mother puts

it in the trunk of her prodigal son, about to travel, and while she knows he is wasting her substance upon harlots and in riotous living, she contents herself with the thought that "he has got his Bible with him, and promised to read a chapter every day." So the Catholic mother uses an image of the "Virgin Mother of God," and the Rocky Mountain savage a bundle of grass: it is a fetish.

But with this general worship of the Bible there is yet a cunning use of it; as the lawyers twist a statue to wring out a meaning they know it does not contain, but themselves put in, or warp a decision till it fits their purpose, so, with equal sophistry, and perhaps self-deceit, do the ministers twist the Bible to support their special doctrine: no book has been explained with such sophistry. Thus, some make the Apostle Paul a Unitarian, and find neither divinity nor the pre-existence ascribed to Jesus in the fourth Gospel; while others discover the full-blown Trinity in the first verse of the first chapter of the first book in the Bible; nay, yet others can find no devil, no wrathful God, and no eternal damnation, even in the New Testament. But all these ministers agree that the Bible is the "Word of God," "His only Word," miraculous and infallible, and that belief in it is indispensable to Christianity, and continually preach this to the people.

I had not been long a minister, before I found this worship of the Bible as a fetish hindering me at each progressive step. If I wished to teach the nobleness of man, the Old Testament and New were there with dreadful condemnations of human nature; did I speak of God's love for all men, the Bible was full of ghastly things — chosen people, hell, devil, damnation — to prove that He loved only a few, and them not over-

much; did I encourage free individuality of soul, such as the great Biblemen themselves had, asking all to be Christians as Jesus was a Christ, there were texts of bondage, commanding a belief in this or that absurdity. There was no virtue but the Scriptures could furnish an argument against it. I could not deny the existence of ghosts and witches, devils and demons, haunting the earth, but revelation could be quoted against me. Nay, if I declared the constancy of nature's laws, and sought therein great argument for the constancy of God, all the miracles came and held their mythologic finger up. Even slavery was "of God," for the "divine statutes" in the Old Testament admitted the principle that man might own a man as well as a garden or an ox, and provided for the measure. Moses and the prophets were on its side, and neither Paul of Tarsus nor Jesus of Nazareth uttered a direct word against it. The best thing in the Bible is the free genius for religion, which is itself inspiration, and not only learns particular truths through its direct normal intercourse with God, but creates new men in its own likeness, to lead every Israel out of his Egypt, and conduct all men to the Land of Promise. Whoso worships the Bible loses this.

I set myself seriously to consider how I could best oppose this monstrous evil; it required great caution. I feared lest I should weaken men's natural trust in God, and their respect for true religion, by rudely showing them that they worshiped an idol, and were misled into gross superstition. This fear did not come from my nature, but from ecclesiastical tradition, and the vice of a New England theologic culture. It has been the maxim of almost every sect in Christendom that the mass of men, in religious matters, must be

ruled with authority, that is, by outward force; this principle belongs to the idea of a supernatural revelation; the people cannot determine for themselves what is true, moral, religious; their opinions must be made for them by supernatural authority, not by them through the normal use of their higher faculties. Hence the Catholic priest appeals to the supernatural church to prove the infallibility of the pope, the actual presence of the body and blood of Jesus in the sacramental bread and wine; hence the Protestant appeals to the supernatural Bible, to prove that Jesus was born with no human father, the total depravity of all men, the wrath of God, the existence of a devil, and the eternal torments of hell. Besides, the man of superior education is commonly separated from sympathizing with the people, and that by the very culture they have paid for with their toil, and which ought to unite the two; he has little confidence in their instinct or reflection.

I had some of these unnatural doubts and fears; but my chief anxiety came less from distrust of mankind, than from diffidence in my own power to tell the truth so clear and well that I should do no harm. However, when I saw the evil which came from this superstition, I could not be silent. In conversation and preaching, I explained little details — this was poetry in the Bible, and not matter of fact; that was only the dress of the doctrine, not truth itself; the authors of Scripture were mistaken here and there; they believed in a devil, which was a popular fancy of their times; a particular prophecy has never been fulfilled.

But the whole matter must be treated more philosophically, and set on its true foundation. So, designing to save men's reverence for the grand truths



of the Bible, while I should wean them away from worshipping it, I soon laboriously wrote two sermons on the contradictions in the Scripture — treating of historic contradictions, where one part is at variance with another, or with actual facts, authenticated by other witnesses; of scientific contradictions, passages at open variance with the facts of the material universe; and of moral and religious contradictions, passages which were hostile to the highest intuitions and reflections of human nature. I made the discourses as perfect as I then could at that early stage of my life; very imperfect and incomplete I should, doubtless, find them now. I then inquired about the expediency of preaching them immediately. I had not yet enough practical experience of men to authorize me to depart from the ecclesiastical distrust of the people; I consulted older and enlightened ministers. They all said, “No! preach no such thing! You will only do harm.” One of the most learned and liberal ministers of New England advised me never to oppose the popular religion. “But, if it be wrong to hinder the religious welfare of the people — what then?” Why, let it alone; all the old philosophers did so; Socrates sacrificed a cock to Æsculapius. He that spits in the wind spits in his own face; you will ruin yourself, and do nobody any good.”

Silenced, but not convinced, I kept my unpreached sermons, read books on kindred matters, and sought to make my work more complete as a whole, and more perfect in all its parts. At length I consulted a very wise and thoughtful layman, old, with large social experience, and much esteemed for sound sense, one who knew the difficulties of the case, and would not let his young children read the Old Testament, lest it should



injure their religious character. I told him my conviction and my doubts, asking his advice. He also thought silence wiser than speech, yet said there were many thoughtful men who felt troubled by the offensive things in the Bible, and would be grateful to any one who could show that religion was independent thereof. "But," he added, "if you try it, you will be misunderstood. Take the society at —, perhaps one of the most intelligent in the city; you will preach your sermons, a few will understand and thank you. But the great vulgar, who hear imperfectly and remember imperfectly, and at the best understand but little, they will say, 'He finds faults in the Bible. What does it all mean; what have we got left?' And the little vulgar, who hear and remember still more imperfectly, and understand even less, they will exclaim, 'Why, the man is an infidel! He tells us there are faults in the Bible. He is pulling down religion.' Then it will get into the newspapers, and all the ministers in the land will be down upon you. No good will be done, but much harm. You had better let it all alone."

I kept my sermons more than a year, doubting whether the little congregation would be able to choose between truth and error when both were set before them, and fearing lest I should weaken their faith in pure religion, when I showed it was not responsible for the contradictions in the Hebrew and Greek Scripture. But at length I could wait no longer; and to ease my own conscience, I preached the two sermons, yet not venturing to look the audience in the face and see the immediate result. In the course of the week, men and women of the commonest education, but of earnest character and profound religious feel-

ing, took pains to tell me of the great comfort I had given them by showing, what they had long felt, that the Bible is one thing and religion another; that the two had no necessary connection; that the faults of the Old Testament or the New need not hinder any man from religious development; and that he never need try to believe a statement in the Bible which was at variance with his reason and his conscience. They thanked me for the attempt to apply common sense to religion and the Bible. The most thoughtful and religious seemed the most instructed. I could not learn that any one felt less reverence for God, or less love for piety and morality. It was plain I had removed a stone of stumbling from the public path. The scales of ecclesiastical tradition fell from my eyes; by this crucial experiment, this guide-board instance, I learned that the mass of men need not be led blindfold by clerical authority, but had competent power of self-direction, and while they needed the scholar as their help, had no need of a self-appointed master. It was clear that a teacher of religion and theology should tell the world all he knew thereunto appertaining, as all teachers of mathematics or of chemistry are expected to do in their profession.

I had once felt very happy, when I could legitimate these three great primal instinctive intuitions, of the divine, the just, and the immortal; I now felt equally joyous at finding I might safely appeal to the same instincts in the mass of New England men, and build religion on that imperishable foundation.

I continued my humble studies, philosophical and theological; and as fast as I found a new truth, I preached it to gladden other hearts in my own parish, and elsewhere, when I spoke in the pulpits of my

friends. The neighboring ministers became familiar with my opinions and my practice, but seldom uttered a reproach. At length, on the 19th of May, 1841, at the ordination of Mr. Shackford, a thoughtful and promising young man, at South Boston, I preached a "Discourse of the Transient and Permanent in Christianity." The Trinitarian ministers who were present joined in a public protest; a great outcry was raised against the sermon and its author. Theological and commercial newspapers rang with animadversions against its wickedness. "Unbeliever," "infidel," "atheist," were the titles bestowed on me by my brothers in the Christian ministry; a venerable minister, who heard the report in an adjoining county, printed his letter in one of the most widely circulated journals of New England, calling on the attorney general to prosecute, the grand jury to indict, and the judge to sentence me to three years' confinement in the State prison for blasphemy.

I printed the sermon, but no bookseller in Boston would put his name to the title-page — Unitarian ministers had been busy with their advice. The Swedenborgian printers volunteered the protection of their name; the little pamphlet was thus published, sold, and vehemently denounced. Most of my clerical friends fell off; some would not speak to me in the street, and refused to take me by the hand; in their public meetings they left the sofas or benches when I sat down, and withdrew from me as Jews from contact with a leper. In a few months most of my former ministerial coadjutors forsook me, and there were only six who would allow me to enter their pulpits. But yet one Unitarian minister, Rev. John L. Russell, though a stranger till then, presently after came and offered

me his help in my time of need. The controlling men of the denomination determined, "This young man must be silenced!" The Unitarian periodicals were shut against me and my friends — the public must not read what I wrote. Attempts were secretly made to alienate my little congregation, and expel me from my obscure station at West Roxbury. But I had not gone to war without counting the cost. I well knew beforehand what awaited me, and had determined to fight the battle through, and never thought of yielding or being silenced. I told my opponents the only man who could "put me down" was myself, and I trusted I should do nothing to bring about that result. If thrust out of my own pulpit, I made up my mind to lecture from city to city, from town to town, from village to village, nay, if need were, from house to house, well assured that I should not thus go over the hamlets of New England till something was come. But the little society came generously to my support and defense, giving me the heartiest sympathy, and offered me all the indulgence in their power. Some ministers and generous-minded laymen stood up on my side, and preached or wrote in defense of free thought and free speech, even in the pulpit. Friendly persons, both men and women, wrote me letters to cheer and encourage, also to warn — this against fear, that against excess and violence; some of them never gave me their names, and I have only this late opportunity to thank them for their anonymous kindness. Of course scurrilous and abusive letters did not fail to appear.

Five or six men in Boston thought this treatment was not quite fair; they wished to judge neither a man nor his doctrines unheard, but to know at length



what I had to say; so they asked me to deliver a course of five lectures in your city, on religious matters. I consented, and in the autumn of 1841 delivered five lectures on "Matters pertaining to Religion;" they were reported in some of the newspapers, most ably and fully in the *New York Tribune*, not then the famous and powerful sheet it has since become. I delivered the lectures several times that winter in New England towns, and published them in a volume the next spring. I thought no bookseller would put his name to the title-page; but when the work was ready for the public eye, my friend, the late Mr. James Brown, perhaps the most eminent man in the American book trade, volunteered to take charge of it, and the book appeared with the advantage of issuing from one of the most respectable publishing-houses in the United States. Years afterwards he told me that two "rich and highly-respectable gentlemen of Boston" begged him to have nothing to do with it; "We wish," said they, "to render it impossible for him to publish his work." But the bookseller wanted fair play.

The next autumn I delivered in Boston six "Sermons for the Times," treating of theology, of religion, and of its application to life. These also were repeated in several other places. But, weary with anxiety and excess of work, both public and private, my health began to be seriously impaired; and in September, 1843, I fled off to Europe, to spend a year in recovery, observation, and thought. I had there an opportunity to study nations I had previously known only by their literature, and by other men's words; to see the effect which despotic, monarchic, and aristocratic institutions have on multitudes of men, who, from generation to generation, had lived under



them; to study the effect of those forms of religion which are enforced by the inquisitor or the constable; and, in many forms, to see the difference between freedom and bondage. In their architecture, painting, and sculpture, the European cities afforded me a new world of art, while the heterogeneous crowds which throng the streets of those vast ancient capitals, so rich in their historic monuments, presented human life in forms I had not known before. It is only in the low parts of London, Paris, and Naples, that an American learns what the ancients meant by the "people," the "populace," and sees what barbarism may exist in the midst of wealth, culture, refinement, and manly virtue. There I could learn what warning and what guidance the Old World had to offer to the New. Visiting some of the seats of learning, which, in Europe, are also sometimes the citadel of new thought and homes of genius, I had an opportunity of conversing with eminent men, and comparing their schemes for improving mankind with my own. Still more, I had an entire year, free from all practical duties, for revising my own philosophy and theology, and laying out plans for future work. My involuntary year of rest and inaction turned out, perhaps, the most profitable in my life, up to that time, in the acquisition of knowledge, and in preparing for much that was to follow.

Coming home the next September, with more physical strength than ever before, I found a hearty welcome from the many friends who crowded the little meeting-house to welcome my return — as before to bid me God-speed — and resumed my usual labors, public and private. In my absence my theological foes had contented themselves with declaring that my doc-

trines had taken no root in America, and my personal friends were turning off from the error of their ways; but the sound of my voice roused my opponents to new activity, and ere long the pulpits and newspapers rang with the accustomed warfare. But even in Boston there were earnest ministers who lifted up their voices in behalf of freedom of thought in the study, and free speech in the pulpit. I shall never cease to be grateful to Mr. Pierpont, Mr. Sargent, and James Freeman Clarke, "friends in need, and friends indeed." They defended the principle of religious freedom, though they did not share the opinions it led me to, nor always approve of the manner in which I set them forth. It was zeal for the true and the right, not special personal friendship for me, which moved them to this manly course. In the most important orthodox quarterly in America, a young Trinitarian minister, Rev. Mr. Porter, reviewed my "Discourse of Religion," not doing injustice to author or work, while he stoutly opposed both. A few other friendly words were also spoken; but what were these among so many!

Under these circumstances you formed your society. A few earnest men thought the great principle of religious freedom was in danger; for, indeed, it was ecclesiastically repudiated, and that too with scorn and hissing by the Unitarians — the "liberal Christians!" the "party of progress" — not less than by the orthodox. Some of you came together, privately at first, and then in public, to look matters in the face, and consider what ought to be done. A young man proposed this resolution: "*Resolved*, That the Rev. Theodore Parker shall have a chance to be heard in Boston." That motion prevailed, and measures were soon taken to make the resolution an event. But, so low was our

reputation, that, though payment was offered in advance, of all the unoccupied halls in Boston, only one could be hired for our purpose; but that was the largest and most central. So, one rainy Sunday, the streets full of snow, on the 16th of February, 1845, for the first time, I stood before you to preach and pray; we were strangers then. I spoke of the "Indispensableness of True Religion for Man's Welfare in his Individual and his Social Life." I came to build up piety and morality; to pull down only what cumbered the ground. I was then in my thirty-fifth year, and had some knowledge of the historical development of religion in the Christian world. I knew that I came to a "thirty years' war," and I had enlisted for the whole, should life hold out so long. I knew well what we had to expect at first; for we were committing the sin which all the great world-sects have held unpardonable — attempting to correct the errors of theory and the vices of practice in the Church. No offense could ecclesiastically be greater; the Inquisition was built to punish such; to that end blazed the fagots at Smithfield, and the cross was set up on Calvary. Truth has her cradle near Golgotha. You knew my spirit and tendency better than my special opinions, which you then gave a "chance to be heard in Boston." But I knew that I had thoroughly broken with the ecclesiastical authority of Christendom; its God was not my God, nor its Scriptures my Word of God, nor its Christ my Saviour; for I preferred the Jesus of historic fact to the Christ of theologic fancy. Its narrow, partial, and unnatural heaven I did not wish to enter on the terms proposed, nor did I fear, since earliest youth, its mythic, roomy hell, wherein the triune God, with His pack of devils to aid, tore the

human race in pieces for ever and ever. I came to preach "another Gospel," sentiments, ideas, actions, quite unlike what belonged to the theology of the Christian Church. Though, severely in earnest, I came to educate men into true religion as well as I could, I knew I should be accounted the worst of men, ranked among triflers, mockers, infidels, and atheists. But I did not know all the public had to offer me of good or ill; nay, I did not know what was latent in myself, nor foresee all the doctrines which then were hid in my own first principles, what embryo fruits and flowers lay sheathed in the obvious bud. But at the beginning I warned you that if you came, Sunday after Sunday, you would soon think very much as I did on the great matters you asked me to teach — because I had drawn my doctrine from the same human nature which was in you, and that would recognize and own its child.

Let me arrange, under three heads, some of the most important doctrines I have aimed to set forth.

I. THE INFINITE PERFECTION OF GOD.— This doctrine is the corner-stone of all my theological and religious teaching — the foundation, perhaps, of all that is peculiar in my system. It is not known to the Old Testament or the New; it has never been accepted by any sect in the Christian world; for though it be equally claimed by all, from the Catholic to the Mormon, none has ever consistently developed it, even in theory, but all continually limit God in power, in wisdom, and still more eminently in justice and in love. The idea of God's imperfection has been carried out with dreadful logic in the "Christian scheme." Thus it is com-



monly taught, in all the great theologies, that, at the crucifixion of Jesus, "the Creator of the universe was put to death, and his own creatures were his executioners." Besides, in the ecclesiastic conception of Deity, there is a fourth person to the Godhead — namely, the Devil, an outlying member, unacknowledged, indeed, the complex of all evil, but as much a part of Deity as either Son or Holy Ghost, and far more powerful than all the rest, who seem but jackals to provide for this "roaring lion," which devours what the others but create, die for, inspire, and fill. I know this statement is ghastly — the theologic notion it sets forth to me seems far more so. While the Christians accept the Bible as the "Word of God," direct, miraculous, infallible, containing a complete and perfect "revelation" of His nature, His character, and conduct, it is quite impossible for them to accept, or even tolerate, the infinite perfection of God. The imperfect and cruel character attributed to God rejoicing in His hell and its legions of devils, is the fundamental vice of the ecclesiastical theology, which so many accept as their "religion," and name the hideous thing "Christianity." They cannot escape the consequence of their first principle; their gate must turn on its own hinge.

I have taught that God contains all possible and conceivable perfection: — the perfection of being, self-subsistence, conditioned only by itself; the perfection of power, all-mightiness; of mind, all-knowingness; of conscience, all-righteousness; of affection, all-lovingness; and the perfection of that innermost element, which in finite man is personality, all-holiness, faithfulness to Himself.

The infinitely perfect God is immanent in the world



of matter, and in the world of spirit, the two hemispheres which to us make up the universe; each particle thereof is inseparable from Him, while He yet transcends both, is limited by neither, but in Himself is complete and perfect.

I have not taught that the special qualities I find in the Deity are all that are actually there; higher and more must doubtless appear to beings of larger powers than man's. My definition distinguishes God from all other beings; it does not limit Him to the details of my conception. I only tell what I know, not what others may know, which lies beyond my present consciousness.

He is a perfect Creator, making all from a perfect motive, for a perfect purpose, of perfect substance, and as a perfect means; none other are conceivable with a perfect God. The motive must be love, the purpose welfare, the means the constitution of the universe itself, as a whole and in parts — for each great or little thing coming from Him must be perfectly adapted to secure the purpose it was intended for, and achieve the end it was meant to serve, and represent the causal motive which brought it forth. So there must be a complete solidarity between God and the two-fold universe which He creates. The perfect Creator is thus also a perfect providence; indeed, creation and providence are not objective accidents of Deity, nor subjective caprices, but the development of the perfect motive to its perfect purpose, love becoming a universe of perfect welfare.

I have called God Father, but also Mother, not by this figure implying that the Divine Being has the limitations of the female figure — as some ministers deceitfully allege of late, who might have been sup-

posed to know better than thus to pervert plain speech — but to express more sensibly the quality of tender and unselfish love, which mankind associates more with Mother than aught else beside.

II. THE ADEQUACY OF MAN FOR ALL HIS FUNCTIONS.— From the infinite perfection of God there follows unavoidably the relative perfection of all that He creates. So, the nature of man, tending to a progressive development of all his manifold powers, must be the best possible nature, most fit for the perfect accomplishment of the perfect purpose, and the attainment of the perfect end, which God designs for the race and the individual. It is not difficult in this general way to show the relative perfection of human nature, deducing this from the infinite perfection of God; but I think it impossible to prove it by the inductive process of reasoning from concrete facts of external observation, of which we know not yet the entire sum, nor any one, perhaps, completely. Yet I have traveled also this inductive road, as far as it reaches, and tried to show the constitution of man's body, with its adaptation to the surrounding world of matter, and the constitution of his spirit, with its intellectual, moral, affectional, and religious powers, and its harmonious relation with the world of matter, which affords them a playground, a school, and a workshop. So I have continually taught that man has in himself all the faculties he needs to accomplish his high destination, and in the world of matter finds, one by one, all the material helps he requires.

We all see the unity of life in the individual; his gradual growth from merely sentient and passive babyhood, up to thoughtful, self-directing manhood. I

have tried to show there was a similar unity of life in the human race, pointing out the analogous progressive development of mankind, from the state of ignorance, poverty, and utter nakedness of soul and sense, the necessary primitive conditions of the race, up to the present civilization of the leading nations. The primitive is a wild man, who gradually grows up to civilization. To me, the notorious facts of human history, the condition of language, art, industry, and the footprints of man left all over the torrid and temperate lands, admit of no other interpretation. Of course it must have required many a thousand years for Divine Providence to bring this child from his mute, naked, ignorant poverty, up to the many-voiced, many-colored civilization of these times; and, as in the strata of mountain and plain, on the shores of the sea, and under "the bottom of the monstrous world," the geologist finds proof of time immense, wherein this material cosmos assumed its present form, so in ruins of cities, in the weapons of iron, bronze, or stone, found in Scandinavian swamps, on the sub-aquatic enclosures of the Swiss lakes, in the remains of Egyptian industry, which the holy Nile, "mother of blessings" — now spiritual to us, as once material to those whose flesh she fed — has covered with many folds of earth and kept for us; and still more in the history of art, science, war, industry, and the structure of language itself, a slow-growing plant, do I find proof of time immense, wherein man, this spiritual cosmos, has been assuming his present condition, individual, domestic, social, and national, and accumulating that wealth of things and thoughts which is the mark of civilization. I have tried to show by history the progressive development of industry and wealth, of mind and knowl-

edge, of conscience and justice, of the affections and philanthropy, of the soul and true religion; the many forms of the family, the community, State, and Church; I look on as so many "experiments in living," all useful, each, perhaps, in its time and place, as indispensable as the various geological changes. But this progressive development does not end with us; we have seen only the beginning; the future triumphs of the race must be vastly greater than all accomplished yet. In the primal instincts and automatic desires of man, I have found a prophecy that what he wants is possible, and shall one day be actual. It is a glorious future on earth which I have set before your eyes and hopes, thereby stimulating both your patience to bear now what is inevitable, and your thought and toil to secure a future triumph to be had on no other terms. What good is not with us is before, to be attained by toil and thought, and religious life.

III. ABSOLUTE OR NATURAL RELIGION.—In its complete and perfect form, this is the normal development, use, discipline, and enjoyment of every part of the body, and every faculty of the spirit; the direction of all natural powers to their natural purposes. I have taught that there were three parts which make up the sum of true religion; the emotional part, of right feelings, where religion at first begins in the automatic, primal instinct; the intellectual part, of true ideas, which either directly represent the primitive, instinctive feelings of whoso holds them, or else, produce a kindred, secondary, and derivative feeling in whoso receives them; and the practical part, of just actions, which correspond to the feelings and the ideas, and make the mere thought or emotion into a concrete



deed. So, the true religion which comes from the nature of man, consists of normal feelings towards God and man, of correct thoughts about God, man, and the relation between them, and of actions corresponding to the natural conscience when developed in harmony with the entire constitution of man.

But this religion which begins in the instinctive feelings, and thence advances to reflective ideas, assumes its ultimate form in the character of men, and so appears in their actions, individual, domestic, social, national, ecclesiastical, and general-human; it builds manifold institutions like itself, wherein it rears up men in its own image. All the six great historic forms of religion — the Brahmanic, Hebrew, Classic, Buddhist, Christian, Mahometan — profess to have come miraculously from God, not normally from man; and, spite of the excellence which they contain, and the vast service the humblest of them has done, yet each must ere long prove a hindrance to human welfare, for it claims to be a finality, and makes the whole of human nature wait upon an accident of human history — and that accident the whim of some single man. The absolute religion which belongs to man's nature, and is gradually unfolded thence, like the high achievements of art, science, literature, and politics, is only distinctly conceived of in an advanced stage of man's growth; to make its idea a fact, is the highest triumph of the human race. This is the idea of humanity, dimly seen, but clearly felt, which has flitted before the pious eyes of men in all lands and many an age, and been prayed for as the "kingdom of heaven." The religious history of the race is the record of man's continual but unconscious efforts to attain this "desire of all nations;" poetic stories of the "golden age," or



of man in the Garden of Eden, are but this natural wish looking back and fondly dreaming that "the former days were better than these." But while all the other forms of religion must ultimately fail before this, fading as it flowers, each one of them has yet been a help towards it, probably indispensable to the development of mankind. For each has grown out of the condition of some people, as naturally as the wild primitive flora of Santa Cruz has come from the state of this island — its geologic structure and chemical composition, its tropic heat, and its special situation amid the great currents of water and of air; as naturally as the dependent fauna of the place comes from its flora. Thus in the religions of mankind, as in the various governments, nay, as in the different geologic periods, there is diversity of form, but unity of aim; destruction is only to create; earthquakes, which submerged the sunken continents whose former mountains are but islands now, and revolutions, in which the Hebrew and Classic religions went under, their poetic summits only visible, have analogous functions to perform — handmaids of creation both.

For these three great doctrines — of God, of Man, of Religion — I have depended on no Church and no Scripture; yet have I found things to serve me in all scriptures and every church. I have sought my authority in the nature of man — in facts of consciousness within me, and facts of observation in the human world without. To me the material world and the outward history of man do not supply a sufficient revelation of God, nor warrant me to speak of infinite perfection. It is only from the nature of man, from facts of intuition, that I can gather this greatest of all

truths, as I find it in my consciousness reflected back from Deity itself.

I know well what may be said of the "feebleness of all the human faculties," their "unfaithfulness and unfitness for their work;" that the mind is not adequate for man's intellectual function, nor the conscience for the moral, nor the affections for the philanthropic, nor the soul for the religious, nor even the body for the corporeal, but that each requires miraculous help from God who is only outside of humanity. There is a denial which boldly rejects the immortality of man and the existence of Deity, with many another doctrine, dear and precious to mankind; but the most dangerous scepticism is that, which, professing allegiance to all these, and crossing itself at the name of Jesus, is yet so false to the great primeval instincts of man, that it declares he cannot be certain of anything he learns by the normal exercise of any faculty. I have carefully studied this school of doubt, modern, not less than old, as it appears in history. In it there are honest inquirers after truth, but misled by some accident, and also sophists, who live by their sleight of mind, as jugglers by their dexterity of hand. But the chief members of this body are the mockers, who, in a world they make empty, find the most fitting echo to their hideous laugh; and churchmen of all denominations, who are so anxious to support their ecclesiastic theology, that they think it is not safe on its throne till they have annihilated the claim of reason, conscience, the affections, and the soul to any voice in determining the greatest concerns of man — thinking there is no place for the Christian Church or the Bible till they have nullified the faculties which created both, and rendered Bible-makers and

Church-founders impossible. But it is rather a poor compliment these ecclesiastic sceptics pay their Deity, to say He so makes and manages the world that we cannot trust the sights we see, the sounds we hear, the thoughts we think, or the moral, affectional, religious emotions we feel; that we are certain neither of the intuitions of instinct, nor the demonstrations of reason, but yet by some anonymous testimony, can be made sure that Balaam's she-ass spoke certain Hebrew words, and one undivided third part of God was "born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, descended into Hell, and the third day rose again," to take away the wrath which the other two undivided third parts of God felt against all mankind.

It is not for me to say there is no limit to the possible attainments of man's religious or other faculties. I will not dogmatize where I do not know. But history shows that the Hercules' Pillars of one age are sailed through in the next, and a wide ocean entered on, which in due time is found rich with islands of its own, and washing a vast continent not dreamed of by such as slept within their temples of old, while it sent to their very coasts its curious joints of unwonted cane, its seeds of many an unknown tree, and even elaborate boats, wherein lay the starved bodies of strange-featured men, with golden jewels in their ears. No doubt there are limits to human industry, for finite man is bounded on every side; but, I take it, the Hottentot, the Gaboon negro, and the wild man of New Guinea, antecedently; would think it impossible that mankind should build the pyramids of Egypt for royal ostentation, for defense throw up the fortresses of Europe and the wall of China, or for economic use lay down the roads of earth, of water, iron, wood, or

stone, which now so swiftly help to develop the material resources and educate the spiritual powers of Europe and America. Still less would they conceive it possible for men to make all the farms, the mills, the shops, the houses, and the ships of civilized mankind. But the philosopher sees it is possible for toil and thought soon to double, and then multiply manifold the industrial attainments of Britain or New England.

No doubt there may be a limit to mathematic thought, though to me that would seem boundless, and every scientific step therein to be certain; but the barefooted negro, who goads his oxen under my window, and can only count his two thumbs, is no limit to Archimedes, Descartes, Newton, and Laplace; no more are these men of vast genius a limit to the mathematic possibility of humankind. They who invented letters, arithmetic symbols, gunpowder, the compass, the printing press, the telescope, the steam-engine, and the telegraph, only ploughed in corners of the field of human possibility, and showed its bounds were not where they had been supposed. A thousand years ago the world had not a man, I think, who could even dream of such a welfare as New England now enjoys. Who shall tell industrious, mathematic, progressive mankind, "Stop there; you have reached the utmost bound of human possibility; beyond it, economy is waste, and science folly, and progress downfall!" No more is the atheistic mocker or the ecclesiastic bigot commissioned to stop the human race with his cry, "Cease there, mankind, thy religious search! for thousand million-headed as thou art, thou canst know nought directly of thy God, thy duty, or thyself! Pause, and accept my authenticated word; stop, and despair!"



I know too well the atheistic philosopher's bitter mock, and the haughty scorn of theologic despisers of mankind, who, diverse in all besides, yet agree in their contempt for human nature, glory in the errors of genius, or the grosser follies of mankind, and seek out of the ruins of humanity to build up, the one his palace, and the other his church. But I also know that mankind heeds neither the atheistic philosopher nor the theologic despiser of his kind; but, faithful to the great primeval instincts of the soul, believing, creating, and rejoicing, goes on its upward way, nor doubts of man or God, of sense or intellect.

These three great doctrines I have preached positively, as abstract truth, representing facts of the universe; that might be peaceful work. But they must take a concrete form, and be applied to the actual life of the individual, family, community, State, and Church; this would have a less peaceful look; for I must examine actual institutions, and criticise their aim, their mode of operation, and their result. The great obvious social forces in America may be thus summed up:—

1. There is the organized trading power — having its home in the great towns, which seeks gain with small regard to that large justice which represents alike the mutual interests and duties of all men, and to that humanity which interposes the affectional instinct when conscience is asleep. This power seems to control all things, amenable only to the almighty dollar.

2. The organized political power, the parties in office, or seeking to become so. This makes the statutes, but is commonly controlled by the trading



power, and has all of its faults, often intensified; yet it seems amenable to the instincts of the people, who, on great occasions, sometimes interfere and change the traders' rule.

3. The organized ecclesiastical power, the various sects which, though quite unlike, yet all mainly agree in their fundamental principle of vicariousness — an alleged revelation, instead of actual human faculties, salvation from God's wrath and eternal ruin, by the atoning blood of crucified God. This is more able than either of the others; and though often despised, in a few years can control them both. In this generation no American politician dares affront it.

4. The organized literary power, the endowed colleges, the periodical press, with its triple multitude of journals — commercial, political, theological — and sectarian tracts. This has no original ideas, but diffuses the opinion of the other powers whom it represents, whose will it serves, and whose kaleidoscope it is.

I must examine these four great social forces, and show what was good in them, and what was ill; ascertain what natural religion demanded of each, and what was the true function of trade, government, a church, and a literature. When I came to a distinct consciousness of my own first principle, and my consequent relation to what was about me, spite of the good they contained, I found myself greatly at variance with all the four. They had one principle, and I another; of course, our aim and direction were commonly different and often opposite. Soon I found that I was not welcome to the American market, State, Church, nor press. It could not be otherwise; yet I confess I had not anticipated so thorough a separa-

tion betwixt me and these forces which control society, but had laid out work I could not execute alone, nor perhaps without the aid of all the four.

It is not now, my friends, worth while for me to enter on the details of these plans which have come to nothing, and which I shall probably never work out; but I ought at least to name some of the most important things I hoped to do. When I first came to Boston I intended to do something for the perishing and dangerous classes in our great towns. The amount of poverty and consequent immorality in Boston is terrible to think of, while you remember the warning of other nations, and look to the day after to-day. Yet it seemed to me the money given by public and private charity — two fountains that never fail in puritanic Boston — was more than sufficient to relieve it all, and gradually remove the deep-seated and unseen cause which, in the hurry of business and of money, is not attended to. There is a hole in the dim-lit public bridge, where many fall through and perish. Our mercy pulls a few out of the water; it does not stop the hole, nor light the bridge, nor warn men of the peril. We need the great charity that palliates effects of wrong, and the greater justice which removes the cause.

Then there was drunkenness, which is the greatest concrete curse of the laboring Protestant population of the North, working most hideous and wide-extended desolation. It is as fatal as starvation to the Irish Catholic. None of the four great social forces is its foe. There, too, was prostitution; men and women mutually polluted and polluting, blackening the face of society with dreadful woe. Besides, in our great towns, I found thousands, especially the poorer Irish,

oppression driving them to us, who, save the discipline of occasional work, got no education here, except what the streets taught them in childhood, or the popish priest and the American demagogue — their two worst foes — noisily offered in their adult years; it seemed to me not difficult for the vast charity of Boston to furnish instruction and guidance to this class of the American people, both in their childhood and their later youth. That admirable institution, the Warren Street Chapel — well-nigh the most Christian public thing in Boston — and the Children's Aid Society at New York, with its kindred, abundantly show how much can be done, and at how little cost.

Still more, I learned early in life that the criminal is often the victim of society, rather than its foe, and that our penal law belongs to the dark ages of brute force, and aims only to protect society by vengeance on the felon, not also to elevate mankind by refining him. In my boyhood I knew a man, the last result of generations of ancestral crime, who spent more than twenty years in our State Prison, and died there, under sentence for life, whose entire illegal thefts did not amount to twenty dollars; and another, not better born, who lawfully stole houses and farms, lived a "gentleman," and at death left a considerable estate, and the name of land-shark. While a theological student, I taught a class in the Sunday School of the State Prison, often saw my fellow-townsmen, became well acquainted with several convicts, learned the mode of treatment, and heard the sermons and ghastly prayers which were let fly at the heads of the poor, unprotected wretches; I saw the "orthodox preachers and other helps," who gave them "spiritual instruction," and learned the utter insufficiency of our

penal law to mend the felon or prevent his growth in wickedness. When I became your minister I hoped to do something for this class of men, whose crimes are sometimes but a part of their congenital misfortune or social infamy, and who are bereft of the sympathy of mankind, and unconstitutionally beset with sectarian ministers, whose function is to torment them before their time.

For all these, the poor, the drunken, and the ignorant, for the prostitute, and the criminal, I meant to do something, under the guidance, perhaps, or certainly with the help of the controlling men of the town or State; but, alas! I was then fourteen years younger than now, and did not quite understand all the consequences of my relation to these great social forces, or how much I had offended the religion of the State, the press, the market, and the Church. The cry, "destroyer," "fanatic," "infidel," "atheist," "enemy of mankind," was so widely sounded forth that I soon found I could do little in these great philanthropies, where the evil lay at our own door. Many as you are for a religious society, you were too few and too poor to undertake what should be done; and outside of your ranks I could look for little help, even by words and counsel. Besides, I soon found my very name was enough to ruin any new good enterprise. I knew there were three periods in each great movement of mankind — that of sentiment, ideas, and action. I fondly hoped the last had come; but when I found I had reckoned without the host, I turned my attention to the two former, and sought to arouse the sentiment of justice and mercy, and to diffuse the ideas which belonged to this five-fold reformation. Hence I took pains to state the facts of poverty, drunken-



ness, ignorance, prostitution, crime; to show their cause, their effect, and their mode of cure, leaving it for others to do the practical work. So, if I wanted a measure carried in the legislature of the town or State, or by some private benevolent society, I did my work by stealth. I sometimes saw my scheme prosper, and read my words in the public reports, while the whole enterprise had been ruined at once if my face or name had appeared in connection with it. I have often found it wise to withhold my name from petitions I have myself set a-going and found successful; I have got up conventions, or mass meetings, whose "managers," asked me not to show my face thereat.

This chronic and progressive unpopularity led to another change of my plans, not abating my activity, but turning it in another direction. To accomplish my work, I must spread my ideas as widely as possible, without resorting to that indecency of advertising so common in America. There was but one considerable publishing-house in the land that would continue to issue my works — this only at my own cost and risk. As it had only a pecuniary interest therein, and that so slight, in its enormous business, my books did not have the usual opportunity of getting known and circulated. They were seldom offered for sale, except in one book-store in Boston; for other States, I must often be my own bookseller. None of the quarterlies or monthlies was friendly to me; most of the newspapers were hostile; the *New York Tribune* and *Evening Post* were almost the only exceptions. So my books had but a small circulation at home in comparison with their diffusion in England and Germany, where, also, they received not only hostile, but most



kindly notice, and sometimes from a famous pen. But another opportunity for diffusing my thought offered itself in the lyceum or public lecture. Opposed by these four great social forces at home, I was surprised to find myself becoming popular in the lecture hall. After a few trials I "got the *hang* of the new school-house," and set myself to serious work therein.

For a dozen years or more, I have done my share of lecturing in public, having many invitations more than I could accept. The task was always disagreeable, contrary to my natural disposition and my scholarly habits. But I saw the nation had reached an important crisis in its destination, and, though ignorant of the fact, yet stood hesitating between two principles. The one was slavery, which I knew leads at once to military despotism — political, ecclesiastical, social — and ends at last in utter and hopeless ruin; for no people fallen on that road has ever risen again; it is the path so many other republics have taken and finished their course, as Athens and the Ionian towns have done, as Rome and the commonwealths of the middle ages. The other was freedom, which leads at once to industrial democracy — respect for labor, government over all, by all, for the sake of all, rule after the eternal right as it is writ in the constitution of the universe — securing welfare and progress. I saw that these four social forces were advising, driving, coaxing, wheedling the people to take the road to ruin; that our "great men," in which "America is so rich beyond all other nations of the earth," went strutting along that path to show how safe it is, crying out "Democracy," "Constitution," "Washington," "Gospel," "Christianity," "Dollars," and the like, while the instincts of the people, the tradi-

tions of our history, and the rising genius of men and women well-born in these times of peril, with still, small voice, whispered something of self-evident truths and inalienable rights.

I knew the power of a great idea; and spite of the market, the State, the Church, the press, I thought a few earnest men in the lecture halls of the North, might yet incline the people's mind and heart to justice and the eternal law of God — the only safe rule of conduct for nations, as for you and me — and so make the American experiment a triumph and a joy for all humankind. Nay, I thought I could myself be of some service in that work; for the nation was yet so young, and the instinct of popular liberty so strong, it seemed to me a little added weight would turn the scale to freedom. So I appointed myself a home missionary for lectures.

Then, too, I found I could say what I pleased in the lecture room, so long as I did not professedly put my thought into a theologic or political shape; while I kept the form of literature or philosophy, I could discourse of what I thought most important, and men would listen one hour, two hours, nay, three hours: and the more significant the subject was, the more freely, profoundly, and fairly it was treated, the more would the people come, the more eagerly listen and enthusiastically accept. So I spared no labor in preparation or delivery, but took it for granted the humblest audience, in the least intelligent town or city, was quite worthy of my best efforts, and could understand my facts and metaphysic reasonings. I did not fear the people would be offended, though I hurt their feelings never so sore.

Besides, the work was well paid for in the large

towns, while the small ones did all they could afford — giving the lecturer for a night more than the school-master for a month. The money thus acquired enabled me to do four desirable things, which it is not needful to speak of here.

Since 1848 I have lectured eighty or a hundred times each year — in every Northern State east of the Mississippi, once also in a slave State, and on slavery itself. I have taken most exciting and important subjects, of the greatest concern to the American people, and treated them independent of sect or party, street or press, and with what learning and talent I could command. I put the matter in quite various forms — for each audience is made up of many. For eight or ten years, on the average, I have spoken to sixty or a hundred thousand persons in each year, besides addressing you on Sundays, in the great hall you throw open to all comers.

Thus I have had a wide field of operation, where I might rouse the sentiment of justice and mercy, diffuse such ideas as I thought needful for the welfare and progress of the people, and prepare for such action as the occasion might one day require. As I was supposed to stand nearly alone, and did not pretend to represent any one but myself, nobody felt responsible for me; so all could judge me, if not fairly, at least with no party or sectarian prejudice in my favor; and as I felt responsible only to myself and my God, I could speak freely: this was a twofold advantage. I hope I have not spoken in vain. I thought that by each lecture I could make a new, deep, and lasting impression of some one great truth on five thoughtful men, out of each thousand who heard me. Don't think me extravagant; it is only *one half of one per cent.*!

If I spoke thus efficiently to sixty thousand in a winter, there would be three hundred so impressed, and in ten years it would be three thousand! Such a result would satisfy me for my work and my loss of scholarly time in this home mission for lectures. Besides, the newspapers of the large towns spread wide the more salient facts and striking generalizations of the lecture, and I addressed the eyes of an audience I could not count nor see.

Still more, in the railroad cars and steamboats I traveled by, and the public or private houses I stopped at, when the lecture was over, strangers came to see me; they were generally marked men — intellectual, moral, philanthropic, at any rate, inquiring and attentive. We sometimes talked on great matters; I made many acquaintances, gained much miscellaneous information about men and things, the state of public opinion, and, perhaps, imparted something in return. So I studied while I taught.

Nor was this all. I had been ecclesiastically reported to the people as a “disturber of the public peace,” an “infidel,” an “atheist,” an “enemy to mankind.” When I was to lecture in a little town, the minister, even the Unitarian, commonly stayed at home. Many, in public or private, warned their followers “against listening to that bad man. Don’t look him in the face!” Others stoutly preached against me. So, in the bar-room I was the song of the drunkard, and the minister’s text in the pulpit. But, when a few hundreds, in a mountain town of New England, or in some settlement on a prairie of the West, or when many hundreds, in a wide city, did look me in the face, and listen for an hour or two while I spoke, plain, right on, of matters familiar to their patriotic



hopes, their business, and their bosoms, as their faces glowed in the excitement of what they heard, I saw the clerical prejudice was stealing out of their mind, and I left them other than I found them. Nay, it has often happened that a man has told me, by letter or by word of mouth, "I was warned against you, but I *would go and see for myself*; and when I came home I said, 'After all, this is a man, and not a devil; at least, he seems human. Who knows but he may be honest, even in his theological notions? Perhaps he is right in his religion. Priests have been a little mistaken sometimes before now, and said hard words against rather good sort of men, if we can trust the Bible. I am glad I heard him.'"

Judging from the results, now pretty obvious to whoso looks, and by the many affectionate letters sent me from all parts of the North, I think I did not overrate the number of thoughtful men who possibly might be deeply and originally influenced by what I said in the lectures. Three thousand may seem a large number; I think it is not excessive. In the last dozen years, I think scarcely any American, not holding a political office, has touched the minds of so many men, by freely speaking on matters of the greatest importance, for this day and for ages to come. I am sure I have uttered great truths, and such are never spoken in vain; I know the effect a few great thoughts had on me in my youth, and judge others by what I experienced myself. Those ministers were in the right, who, years ago, said, "Keep that man out of the lecture room; don't let him be seen in public. Every word he speaks, on any subject, is a blow against our religion!" They meant, against their theology.

Such are the causes which brought me into the lec-



ture room. I did not neglect serving you, while I seemed only to instruct other men; for every friend I made in Pennsylvania or Wisconsin became an auxiliary in that great cause, so dear to you and me. Nay, I did not abandon my scholarly work while traveling and lecturing. The motion of the railroad cars gave a pleasing and not harmful stimulus to thought, and so helped me to work out my difficult problems of many kinds. I always took a sack of books along with me, generally such as required little eyesight and much thought, and so was sure of good company; while traveling I could read and write all day long; but I would not advise others to do much of either; few bodies can endure the long-continued strain on eye and nerve. So, I lost little time, while I fancied I was doing a great and needful work.

When I first came before you to preach, carefully looking before and after, I was determined on my purpose, and had a pretty distinct conception of the mode of operation. It was not my design to found a sect, and merely build up a new ecclesiastical institution, but to produce a healthy development of the highest faculties of men, to furnish them the greatest possible amount of most needed instruction, and help them each to free spiritual individuality. The Church, the State, the community, were not ends, a finality of purpose, but means to bring forth and bring up individual men. To accomplish this purpose I aimed distinctly at two things: first, to produce the greatest possible healthy development of the religious faculty, acting in harmonious connection with the intellectual, moral, and affectional; and second, to lead you to help others in the same work. Let me say a word in detail of each part of my design.

I. According both to my experience and observation, the religious element is the strongest in the spiritual constitution of man, easily controlling all the rest for his good or ill. I wished to educate this faculty under the influence of the true idea of God, of man, and of their mutual relation. I was not content with producing morality alone — the normal action of the conscience and will, the voluntative keeping of the natural law of right: I saw the need also of piety — religious feeling toward the Divine, that instinctive, purely internal love of God, which, I think, is not dependent on conscience. I was led to this aim partly by my own disposition, which, I confess, naturally inclined me to spontaneous pious feeling, my only youthful luxury, more than to voluntary moral action; partly by my early culture, which had given me much experience of religious emotions; and partly, also, by my wide and familiar acquaintance with the mystical writers, the voluptuaries of the soul, who dwelt in the world of pious feeling, heedless of life's practical duties, and caring little for science, literature, justice, or the dear charities of common life.

I count it a great good fortune that I was bred among religious Unitarians, and thereby escaped so much superstition. But I felt early that the "liberal" ministers did not do justice to simple religious feeling; to me their preaching seemed to relate too much to outward things, not enough to the inward pious life; their prayers felt cold; but certainly they preached the importance and the religious value of morality as no sect, I think, had done before. Good works, the test of true religion, noble character, the proof of salvation, if not spoken, were yet implied in their sermons, spite of their inconsistent and tradi-

tionary talk about "Atonement," "Redeemer," "Salvation by Christ," and their frequent resort to other pieces of damaged phraseology. The effect of this predominant morality was soon apparent. In Massachusetts, the headquarters of the Unitarians, not only did they gather most of the eminent intellect into their ranks, the original talent and genius of the most intellectual of the States, but also a very large proportion of its moral talent and moral genius, most of the eminent conscience and philanthropy. Leaving out of sight pecuniary gifts for theological and denominational purposes, which come from peculiar and well-known motives, where the Trinitarians are professedly superior, I think it will be found that all the great moral and philanthropic movements in the State — social, ecclesiastical, and political — from 1800 to 1840, have been chiefly begun and conducted by the Unitarians. Even in the anti-slavery enterprise, the most profound, unrespectable, and unpopular of them all, you are surprised to see how many Unitarians — even ministers, a timid race — have permanently taken an active and influential part. The Unitarians certainly once had this moral superiority, before the free, young, and growing party became a sect, hide-bound, bridled with its creed, harnessed to an old, lumbering, and crazy chariot, urged with sharp goads by near-sighted drivers, along the dusty and broken pavement of tradition, noisy and shouting, but going nowhere.

But yet, while they had this great practical excellence, so obvious once, I thought they lacked the deep, internal feeling of piety, which alone could make it lasting; certainly they had not that most joyous of all delights. This fact seemed clear in

their sermons, their prayers, and even in the hymns they made, borrowed, or "adapted." Most powerfully preaching to the understanding, the conscience, and the will, the cry was ever, "duty, duty! work, work!" They failed to address with equal power the soul, and did not also shout, "joy, joy! delight, delight!" "Rejoice in God always, and again I say unto you, rejoice!" Their vessels were full of water; it was all laboriously pumped up from deep wells; it did not gush out, leaping from the great spring, that is indeed on the surface of the sloping ground, feeding the little streams that run among the hills, and both quenching the wild asses' thirst, and watering also the meadows newly mown, but which yet comes from the rock of ages, and is pressed out by the cloud-compelling mountains that rest thereon — yes, by the gravitation of the earth itself.

This defect of the Unitarians was a profound one. Not actually, nor consciously, but by the logic of their conduct, they had broken with the old ecclesiastic supernaturalism, that with its whip of fear yet compelled a certain direct, though perverted, action of the simple religious element in the Trinitarians; ceasing to fear "the great and dreadful God" of the Old Testament, they had not quite learned to love the all-beautiful and altogether lovely of the universe. But in general they had no theory which justified a more emotional experience of religion. Their philosophy, with many excellences, was sure of no great spiritual truth. To their metaphysics eternal life was only probable; the great argument for it came not from the substance of human nature, only from an accident in the personal history of a single man; its proof was not *intuitive*, from the primal instincts of mankind; nor *deductive*,



from the nature of God; nor yet *inductive*, from the general phenomena of the twofold universe; it was only *inferential*, from the "resurrection of Christ" — and exceptional fact, without parallel in the story of the race, and that resting on no evidence. Nay, in their chief periodical, when it represented only the opinions of the leaders of the sect, one of their most popular and powerful writers declared the existence of a God was not a certainty of metaphysical demonstration, nor even a fact of consciousness. So this great primal truth, fundamental to all forms of religion, has neither an objective, necessary, and ontological root in the metaphysics of the universe, nor yet a mere subjective, contingent, and psychological root in the consciousness of John and Jane, but, like the existence of "phlogiston" and "the celestial ether" of the interstellar spaces, it is a matter of conjecture, of inference from observed facts purely external and contingent; or, like the existence of the devil, is wholly dependent on the "miraculous and infallible revelation." Surely, a party with no better philosophy, and yet rejecting instinct for guide, breaking with the supernatural tradition at the Trinity, its most important link, could not produce a deep and continuous action of the religious element in the mass of its members, when left individually free; nor when organized into a sect, with the discipline of a close corporation, could it continue to advance, or even to hold its own, and live long on its "Statement of Reasons for not believing the Trinity." Exceptional men — like Henry Ware, Jr., who leaned strongly towards the old supernaturalism, or like Dr. Channing, whose deeper reflection or reading supplied him with a more spiritual philosophy — might escape the misfortune



of their party; but the majority must follow the logic of their principle. The leaders of the sect, their distinctive creed only a denial, always trembling before the orthodox, rejected the ablest, original talent born among them; nay, sometimes scornfully repudiated original genius, each offering a more spiritual philosophy, which they mocked at as "transcendental," and turned off to the noisy road of other sects, not grateful to feet trained in paths more natural. After denying the Trinity, and the Deity of Christ, they did not dare affirm the humanity of Jesus, the naturalness of religion to man, the actual or possible universality of inspiration, and declare that man is not amenable to ecclesiastic authority, either the oral Roman tradition, or the written Hebrew and Greek Scriptures; but naturally communing with God, through many faculties, by many elements, has in himself the divine well of water, springing up full of everlasting life, and sparkling with eternal truth, and so enjoys continuous revelation.

Alas! after many a venturous and profitable cruise, while in sight of port, the winds all fair, the little Unitarian bark, o'ermastered by its doubts and fears, reverses its course, and sails into dark, stormy seas, where no such craft can live. Some of the fragments of the wreck will be borne by oceanic currents where they will be used by the party of progress to help to build more seaworthy ships; whilst others, when water-logged, will be picked up by the great orthodox fleet, to be kiln-dried in a revival, and then serve as moist, poor fuel for its culinary fires. It is a dismal fault in a religious party, this lack of piety, and dimly have the Unitarians answered it; yet let their great merits and services be not forgot.

I found this lack of the emotional part of religion affected many of the reformers. Some men, called by that name, were indeed mere selfish tongues, their only business to find fault and make a noise; such are entitled to no more regard than other common and notorious scolds. But in general, the leading reformers are men of large intellect, of profound morality, earnest, affectional men, full of philanthropy, and living lives worthy of the best ages of humanity. But as a general thing, it seemed to me they had not a proportionate development of the religious feelings, and so had neither the most powerful solace for their many griefs, nor the profoundest joy which is needful to hold them up mid all they see and suffer from. They, too, commonly shared this sensational philosophy, and broke with the ecclesiastic supernaturalism which once helped to supply its defects.

Gradually coming to understand this state of things, quite early in my ministry I tried to remedy it; of course I did the work at first feebly and poorly. I preached piety, unselfish love towards God, as well as morality, the keeping of His natural law, and philanthropy, the helping of His human children. And I was greatly delighted to find that my discourses of piety were as acceptable as my sermons of justice and charity, touching the souls of earnest men. Nay, the more spiritual of the ministers asked me to preach such matters in their pulpits, which I did gladly.

You have broken with the traditions of the various churches whence you have come out, and turned your attention to many of the evils of the day. When I became your minister, I feared lest, in a general disgust at ecclesiastical proceedings, you should abandon this very innermost of all true religion; so I have taken

special pains to show that well-proportioned piety is the ground of all manly excellence, and though it may exist, and often does, without the man's knowing it, yet in its highest form he is conscious of it. On this theme I have preached many sermons, which were very dear to me, though perhaps none of them has yet been published. But coming amongst you with some ministerial experience, and much study of the effect of doctrines, and ecclesiastical modes of procedure, I endeavored to guard against the vices which so often attend the culture of this sentimental part of religion, and to prevent the fatal degeneracy that often attends it. When the religious element is actively excited under the control of the false theological ideas now so prevailing, it often takes one or both of these two misdirections: —

1. It tends to an unnatural mysticism, which dries up all the noble emotions that else would produce a great useful character. The delicate and refined woman developes the sentiment of religion in her consciousness; surrounded by wealth, and seduced by its charms, she reads the more unpractical parts of the Bible, especially the Johannic writings, the Song of Solomon, and the more sentimental portions of the Psalms; studies Thomas à Kempis, Guyon, Fénelon, William Law, Keble; pores over the mystic meditations of St. Augustine and Bernard; she kneels before her costly *Prie-Dieu*, or other sufficient altar, pours out her prayers, falls into an ecstasy of devout feeling, and elegantly disheveled like a Magdalen, weeps most delicious tears. Then rising thence, she folds her idle, unreligious hands, and, with voluptuous scorn, turns off from the homely duties of common life; while not only the poor, the sick, the ignorant, the drunken,

the enslaved, and the abandoned are left uncared for, but her own household is neglected, her husband, her very children go unblessed. She lives a life of intense religious emotion in private, but of intense selfishness at home, and profligate worldliness abroad. Her pious feeling is only moon-shine; nay, it is a will-o'-the-wisp, a wandering fire, which

“Leads to bewilder, and dazzles to blind.”

She is a voluptuary of the soul, often likewise in the senses; her prayers are worth no more than so much novel-reading; she might as well applaud Don Giovanni with her laugh at the opera, as St. John with her tears at church. This woman's religion is internal glitter, which gives nor light nor heat. “Like a fly in the heart of an apple, she dwells in perpetual sweetness,” but also in perpetual sloth, a selfish wanton of the soul. In his *Parc aux cerfs*, Louis XV. trained his maiden victims to this form of devotion.

2. It leads to ecclesiastical ritualism. This is the more common form in New England, especially in hard men and women. They join the church, and crowd the ecclesiastical meetings. Bodily presence there is thought a virtue; they keep the Sunday severely idle; their ecclesiastical decorum is awful as a winter's night at the North Pole of cold; with terrible punctuality they attend to the ordinance of bread and wine, looking grim and senseless as the death's head on the tombstones close by. Their babies are sprinkled with water, or themselves plunged all over in it; they have morning prayers and evening prayers, grace before meat, and after meat, grace; nay, they give money for the theological purposes of their sect, and religiously hate men not of their household of faith.



Their pious feeling has spent itself in secreting this abnormal shell of ritualism, which now cumpers them worse than Saul's great armor on the stripling shepherd lad. What can such pachyderms of the Church accomplish that is good, with such an elephantiasis to swell, and bark, and tetter every limb? Their religious feeling runs to shell, and has no other influence. They sell rum, and trade in slaves or coolies. They are remorseless creditors, unscrupulous debtors; they devour widow's houses. Vain are the cries of humanity in such ears, stuffed with condensed wind. Their lives are little, dirty, and mean.

Mindful of these two vices, which are both diseases of the misdirected soul, and early aware that devoutness is by no means the highest expression of love for God, I have attempted not only to produce a normal development of religious feeling, but to give it the normal direction to the homely duties of common life, in the kitchen, the parlor, nursery, school-room, in the field, market, office, shop, or ship, or street, or wherever the lines of our lot have fallen to us; and to the "primal virtues," that shine aloft as stars which mariners catch glimpses of mid ocean's rack, and learn their course, and steer straight in to their desired haven; and also, to the "charities, that soothe, and heal, and bless," and which are scattered at mankind's feet like flowers, each one a beauty the bee sucks honey from, and a seed to sow the world with wholesome loveliness; for it is plain to me that the common duties of natural life are both the best school for the development of piety, and the best field for its exercise when grown to manly size.

II. Partly for your education in true religion, and partly to promote the welfare of your brother man,



I have preached much on the great social duties of your time and place, recommending not only "palliative charity," but still more "remedial justice." So I have not only preached on the private individual virtues, which are, and ought to be, the most constant theme of all pulpits, but likewise on the public social virtues, that are also indispensable to the general welfare. This brought me into direct relation with the chief social evils of our day. In treating these matters I have proceeded with much caution, beginning my attack a great way off. First of all, I endeavored to establish philosophically the moral principle I should appeal to, and show its origin in the constitution of man, to lay down the natural law so plain that all might acknowledge and accept it; next, I attempted to show what welfare had followed in human history from keeping this law, and what misery from violating it; then I applied this moral principle of nature and the actual experience of history to the special public vice I wished to whelm over. Such a process may seem slow; I think it is the only one sure of permanent good effects. In this manner I have treated several prominent evils.

1. I have preached against intemperance, showing the monstrous evil of drunkenness, the material and moral ruin it works so widely. My first offense in preaching came when I first spoke on the misery occasioned by this ghastly vice. The victims of it sat before me, and were in great wrath; they never forgave me. Yet, I have not accepted the opinion of the leading temperance men, that the use of intoxicating drinks is in itself a moral or a physical evil. I found they had not only a medical, but also a dietetic use to serve, and in all stages of development above the savage, man resorts to some sort of stimulus as food for the nervous

system; for a practice so nearly universal, I suppose there must be a cause in man's natural relation to the world of matter. Accordingly, I do not like the present legal mode of treating the vice, thinking it rests on a false principle which will not long work well; yet public opinion, now setting strong against this beastly vice, required the experiment, which could never be tried under better auspices than now. But I have gladly joined with all men to help to put down this frightful vice, which more than any other concrete cause hinders the welfare and progress of the working people of the North. It was the first public social evil I ever attacked. I have not ceased to warn old and young against this monstrous and ugly sin, and to call on the appointed magistrates to use all their official power to end so fatal a mischief. In a great trading town, of course, such calls are vain; the interest of the few is against the virtue of the people.

2. I have preached against covetousness — the abnormal desire of accumulating property. In the Northern States our civilization is based on respect for industry in both forms, toil and thought. Property is the product of the two; it is human power over nature, to make the material forces of the world supply the wants of man; its amount is always the test of civilization. Our political and social institutions do not favor the accumulation of wealth in a few men or a few families; no permanent entails are allowed; it follows the natural laws of distribution amongst all the owner's children, or according to his personal caprice; in a few generations a great estate is widely scattered abroad. But as we have no hereditary honors, office, or even title, and as wealth is all the parent can bequeath his child, it becomes not only

a material power, but also a social distinction — the only one transmissible from sire to son. So wealth, and not birth from famous ancestors, is the thing most coveted; the stamp of the almighty dollar is the mark of social distinction; science may be accounted folly, and genius madness, in the paved or the furrowed towns, but money is power in each. American "aristocracy" rests on this movable basis; it is plutocracy; every poor white boy may hope to trundle its golden wheels on to his little patch of ground, for the millionaire is not born, but self-made. Hence comes an intense desire of riches; a great amount of practical talent goes out in quest thereof. Beside its intrinsic character, respect for money is in America what loyalty to the crown and deference to feudal superiors is in England; "the ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib," and the Americans the millionaire, the highest product of plutocracy.

Now, on the whole, I do not find this desire of property excessive in the people of the North. I would greatness rather than lessen it, for it is the motive of our general enterprise, the proximate cause of much of our welfare and success. No nation was ever too well fed, housed, clad, adorned, and comforted in general; poverty, subordination to material want, is still the great concrete barrier to civilization; "the nations of the world" *must* think chiefly of what they shall eat and drink, and wherewithal be clothed. In this generation, the productive industry of New England seems vulgar to careless eyes, and excessive to severe ones; but it is yet laying the material and indispensable foundation for a spiritual civilization in some future age, more grand, I think, than mankind has hitherto rejoiced in. For not only will the peo-

ple's property be greater in proportion to their number — their power to feed, clothe, house, adorn, and comfort themselves — but it will be more widely distributed, consequently directed with more wisdom and humanity, and so bring forth and develop both more and higher talents. I have advised all men to shun poverty; to seek a generous competence for themselves and their dependents, and that too by honest work, earning all they take. I see that a great fortune, thus acquired, may now be a nobler honor than all the red laurels of Nelson or Wellington, as well as a power of use and beauty for time to come. I honor the manly, self-denying enterprise which starts with no heritage but itself, and honestly earns a great estate. The man who makes a school-book like Colburn's "First Lessons in Arithmetic," or invents a labor-saving contrivance like the sewing machine, or the reaping and thrashing machines, or who by trade develops the resources of the country, deserves a pay proportionate to his service. A Boston merchant died in 1847, who had so helped to turn the rivers of New England into spinners and weavers, that I think he earned millions of dollars more than he received. If a man fully pay in efficient, productive toil and thought, he is entitled to all he gets, one dollar or many million dollars; he earns his riches, gives equivalent for equivalent — for all honest traffic is but actual barter, mutual exchange of my work and your work — and if his estate be but what he has thus actually and honestly paid for with a service given, equivalent to the service received, what he can virtuously keep or humanely apply and expend, then it will never be too large.

But covetousness — the lust after property already created; the dishonest desire to get wealth without



paying for it with proportionate service by toil and thought; the wish to hoard it as the chief object in life, holding for no generous use; to expend it in personal luxury, making man a delicate swine to eat and drink beyond the needs of generous nature, a butterfly to glitter in the public sun, or before the private stars of fashion, a sloth, to lie idle and deform the ground; or to exhibit it for ostentation, fostering an unwieldy self-esteem or more disgraceful vanity — this is a vice I have warned men against continually; I began early. It is a popular and most respectable offense, often counted a virtue. It assumes many forms, now terrible and then ridiculous. I have dealt with it accordingly, now exposing its injustice or its folly, now satirizing its vulgar indecency, now showing that the ill-bred children of men grossly rich come to a fate no better than the sons and daughters of the grossly poor; that voluntary beggars in ruffles and voluntary beggars in rags, are alike supported at the public cost, paying nothing for what they take, and so should be objects of contempt in a world where he is greatest who does the most and best.

I have often spoken of the tyranny of the rich over the thriving and the poor — our country, state, and town all furnishing grievous examples of the fact. “As the lion eateth up the wild ass in the wilderness, so the rich eateth up the poor,” is as true now in New England as two thousand years ago in Egypt. But when I have seen a man with large talents for business helping others while he helped himself, enriching his workmen, promoting their education, their virtue, and self-respect, I have taken special delight in honoring such an act of practical humanity. Happily we need not go out of Boston to find examples of this rare philanthropy.



3. As I was a schoolmaster at seventeen, though more from necessity than early fitness, I fear, and chairman of a town school committee at twenty-two, I have naturally felt much interest in the education of the people, and have often preached thereon. But I have seen the great defect of our culture, both in public and private schools; our education is almost entirely intellectual, not also moral, affectional, and religious. The Sunday Schools by no means remedy this evil, or attempt to mend it; they smartly exercise the devotional feelings, accustom their pupils to a certain ritualism, which is destined only to serve ecclesiastical, and not humane purposes; they teach some moral precepts of great value, but their chief function is to communicate theological doctrine, based on the alleged supernatural revelation, and confirmed by miracles, which often confound the intellect, and befool the conscience. They do not even attempt any development of the higher faculties to an original activity at all commensurate with the vigorous action of the understanding. In the public schools there are sometimes devotional exercises, good in themselves, but little pains is directly taken to educate or even instruct the deeper faculties of our nature. The evil seems to increase, for of late years many of the reading-books of our public and private schools seem to have been compiled by men with only the desire of gain for their motive, who have rejected those pieces of prose or poetry which appeal to what is deepest in human nature, rouse indignation against successful wrong, and fill the child with generous sentiments and great ideas. Sunday School books seem yet worse, so loaded with the superstitions of the sects. The heroism of this age finds no voice nor language in our schools.

But this lack of morality in our schemes of culture appears most eminent in the superior education, in colleges, and other costly seminaries for maids and men. The higher you go up in the scale of institutions, the less proportionate pains is taken with the development of conscience, the affections, and the soul; in the dame school for infants, something is done to make the child "a good boy," or "a good girl," but almost nothing in the richest and most respectable colleges. They are commonly seats of an unprogressive and immoral conservatism, where the studious youth may learn many an important discipline — mathematical, philological, scientific, literary, metaphysical, and theologic — but is pretty sure to miss all effective instruction in the great art and science of personal or public humanity. Hence our colleges are institutions not only to teach the mind, but also for the general *hunkerization* of young men; and a professor is there sometimes unscrupulously appointed whose nature and character make it notorious that his chief function must necessarily be to poison the waters of life, which young men, from generation to generation, will be compelled to bow down at, and drink. In the last forty years I think no New England college, collective faculty, or pupils, has shown sympathy with any of the great forward movements of mankind, which are indicated by some national outbreak, like the French Revolutions of 1830 or 1848.

From this fatal defect of our scheme of culture, it comes to pass that the class which has the superior education — ministers, professors, lawyers, doctors, and the like — is not only never a leader in any of the great humane movements of the age, where justice, philanthropy, or piety is the motive, but it continually

retards all efforts to reform evil institutions, or otherwise directly increase the present welfare or the future progress of mankind. The scholars' culture has palsied their natural instincts of humanity, and gives them instead, neither the personal convictions of free, moral reflection, nor the traditional commands of church authority, but only the maxims of vulgar thrift, "get the most, and give the least; buy cheap, and sell dear!" Exceptional men, like Channing, Pierpont, Emerson, Ripley, Mann, Rantoul, Phillips, Sumner, and a few others, only confirm the general rule, that the educated is also a selfish class, morally not in advance of the mass of men. No thoughtful, innocent man, arraigned for treason, would like to put himself on the college, and be tried by a jury of twelve scholars; it were to trust in the prejudice and technic sophistry of a class, not to "put himself on the country," and be judged by the moral instincts of the people.

Knowing these facts — and I found them out pretty early — I have told them often in public, and shown the need of a thorough reform in our educational institutions. Still more have I preached on the necessity that you should do in private for your children what no school in this age is likely to attempt — secure such a great development of the moral, affectional, and religious powers, as shall preserve all the high instincts of nature, while it enriches every faculty by the information given. I need not now speak of what I had long since intended to do amongst you in this matter, when the opportunity should offer; for, alas, when it came, my power to serve you quickly went.

4. I have preached much on the condition of woman. I know the great, ineffaceable difference between the

spiritual constitution of her and man, and the consequent difference in their individual, domestic, and social functions. But, examining the matter both philosophically and historically, it seems clear that woman is man's equal, individually and socially entitled to the same rights. There is no conscious hostility or rivalry between the two, such as is often pretended; man naturally inclines to be a little more than just to her, she a little more than fair to him; a man would find most favor with a jury of women, as boys with nurses. But, certainly, her condition is sadly unfortunate; for, whether treated as a doll or a drudge, she is practically regarded as man's inferior, intended by nature to be subordinate to him, subservient to his purposes; not a free spiritual individuality like him, but a dependent parasite or a commanded servant. This idea appears in all civilized legislation; and in the "revealed religion" of Jews and Christians, as well as in that of Brahmans and Mahometans. Even in New England no public provision is made to secure superior education for girls as for boys. Woman has no place in the superior industry — shut out from the legal, clerical, and medical professions, and the higher departments of trade, limited to domestic duties, and other callings which pay but little; when she does a man's service she has but half of his reward; no political rights are awarded to her; she is always taxed, but never represented. If married, her husband has legally an unnatural control over her property and her person, and, in case of separation, over her children. A young man with superior talents, born to no other heritage, can acquire wealth, or, unaided, obtain the best education this age makes possible to any one; but with a woman it is not so; if poor, she can only



be enriched by marriage; hence mercantile wedlock is far more pardonable in her; no talents, no genius can secure a poor man's daughter her natural share in the high culture of the age. The condition of woman follows unavoidably from the popular idea, which she also shares often in the heroic degree, that she is by nature inferior to man. Prostitution and its half-known evils come from this as naturally as crime and drunkenness from squalid want, as plants from seeds.

I have preached the equivalency of man and woman — that each in some particulars is inferior to the other, but, on the whole, mankind and woman-kind, though so diverse, are yet equal in their natural faculties; and have set forth the evils which come to both from her present inferior position, her exclusion from the high places of social or political trust. But I have thought she will generally prefer domestic to public functions, and have found no philosophic or historic argument for thinking she will ever incline much to the rough works of man, or take any considerable part in Republican politics; in a court like that of Louis XV, or Napoleon III, it might be different; but I have demanded that she should decide that question for herself, choose her own place of action, have her vote in all political matters, and be eligible to any office.

In special, I have urged on you the duty of attending to the education of young women, not only in accomplishments — which are so often laborious in the process, only to be ridiculous in the display, and idle in their results — but in the grave discipline of study, and for the practical duties of life. A woman voluntarily ignorant of household affairs and the management of a family, should be an object of pity or of



contempt; while the women of New England incline to despise the indispensable labor of housekeeping, and can neither make wearable garments, nor eatable bread, I have sometimes doubted whether the men of New England, irritated with their sour fare, would think them quite fit to make laws for the State, or even for the Union. I have also called your attention to those most unfortunate outcasts, the friendless young girls in the streets of your own city, the most abandoned of the perishing class, who will soon become the most harmful of the dangerous class — for prostitution is always twofold, male as well as female damnation.

It is delightful to see the change now taking place in the popular idea of woman, and the legislation of the Northern States. This reform at once will directly affect half the population, and soon also the other half. I am not alarmed at the evils which obviously attend this change — the growing dislike of maternal duties, the increase of divorces, the false theories of marriage, and the unhappy conduct which thence results; all these are transient things, and will soon be gone — the noise and dust of the wagon that brings the harvest home.

5. The American people are making one of the most important experiments ever attempted on earth, endeavoring to establish an industrial democracy, with the principle that all men are equal in their natural rights, which can be alienated only by the personal misconduct of their possessor; the great body of the people is the source of all political power, the maker of all laws, the ultimate arbiter of all measures; while the special magistrates, high and low, are but appointed agents, acting under the power of attorney the people intrust them with. The experiment was

perhaps never tried before, certainly not on so large a scale, and with so fair an opportunity for success; but wise men have always foretold its utter failure, and pointed to the past as confirming this prophecy. Certainly, we have human history against us, but I think human nature is on our side, and find no reason to doubt the triumph of the American idea. So I have taken a deep interest in politics, important not merely as representing the national housekeeping, but also the public morality, and so tending to help or hinder the people's success. Never failing to vote, I have yet kept myself out of the harness of every party; responsible to none and for none, I have been free to blame or praise the principles and the purposes of all, their measures and their men. Addressing such multitudes, most of them younger than I, in times like the last fourteen years, when such important interests came up for public adjudication, and when the great principles of all national morality have been solemnly denied by famous officials, men also of great personal power, who declared that human governments were amenable to no natural law of God, but subject only to the caprice of magistrate or elector — I have felt a profound sense of my responsibility to you as a teacher of religion. So I have preached many political sermons, examining the special measures proposed, exposing the principle they rested on, and the consequences they must produce, and applying the lessons of experience, the laws of human nature, the great doctrines of absolute religion, to the special conduct of the American people. No doubt I have often wounded the feelings of many of you. Pardon me, my friends! if I live long I doubt not I shall do so again and again. You never made me your minister

to flatter, or merely to please, but to instruct and serve.

Treating of politics, I must speak of the conspicuous men engaged therein, when they come to die, for such are the idols of their respective parties. In America there are few objects of conventional respect — no permanent classes who are born to be revered; and as men love to look up and do homage to what seems superior, a man of vulgar greatness, who has more of the sort of talent all have much of, is sure to become an idol if he will but serve the passions of his worshipers; so with us, a great man of that stamp has a more irresponsible power than elsewhere among civilized men; for he takes the place of king, noble, and priest, and controls the public virtue more. The natural function of a great man is to help the little ones; by this test I have endeavored to try such as I must needs speak of. Not responsible for their vice or virtue, I have sought to represent them exactly as I found them, and that, too, without regard to the opinion of men, who only looked up and worshiped, not asking what. If I were an assayer of metals, I should feel bound to declare the character of the specimens brought before me, whether lead or silver; shall I be less faithful in my survey of a great man, “more precious than the fine gold of Ophir”? I am no flatterer, nor public liar-general; when such a one is wanted he is easily found, and may be had cheap; and I cannot treat great men like great babies. So, when I preached on Mr. Adams, who had done the cause of freedom such great service, on General Taylor and Mr. Webster, I aimed to paint them exactly as they were, that their virtues might teach us, and their vices warn. Still further to promote the higher education

of the people, and correct an idolatry as fatal as it is stupid, as dangerous to the public as it is immediately profitable to wily rhetoricians, I have prepared lectures on four great famous Americans — Franklin, Washington, Adams, and Jefferson. The last, however, was not delivered when my present illness laid me low. I wished to daguerreotype these great, noble men, and place true pictures before the people.

Perhaps no part of my public labors has been condemned with more noise and violence than this attempt at historic truth. Certainly I did depart from the panegyrical custom of political and clerical eulogizers of the famous or the wealthy dead; but I have confidence enough in the people of the Northern States to believe they will prefer plain truth to the most rhetorical lies.

I have not quite disdained to turn your eyes to little, mean men, when set in high office, that you might get instruction from their folly or wickedness. So, when the chief magistrate of the city was notoriously the comrade of drunkards, and of the most infamous of humankind, and that of the State was celebrated chiefly for public and private lying, and both abused their office to promote their own little purposes of mischief or of gain, debauching the public virtue, as well as wasting the people's money — I did not fail to advertise the fact, that you at least might learn by the lesson which cost the public so dear.

6. I have preached against war, showing its enormous cost in money and men, and the havoc it makes of public and private virtue. A national occasion was not wanting; for obedient to the whip of the slave-power, which hag-rides the nation still, the American Government — not the people, nor even Congress —



plunged us into a wicked contest with Mexico, she clearly in the right, we notoriously in the wrong. I have often spoken against war, and tried to discourage that "excessive lust for land," that aggressive and invasive spirit, which is characteristic of both the American and British people. It is clear that the strongest races will ultimately supplant the feebler, and take their place, as the strong grasses outroot the weak from the farmer's meadow. I complain not of this just natural law, which indeed pervades the universe; but the work need not be done by violence, nor any form of wrong. So I have preached against the filibustering of America, and the not less wicked diplomatizing and soldiering by which our parent across the sea accomplishes the same thing, though with even more harshness and cruelty.

Yet I have not preached the doctrine of the non-resistants, who never allow an individual to repel wrong by material violence; nor that of the ultra-peace men, who deny a nation's right to stave off an invader's wickedness with the people's bloody hand. The wrathful emotions are also an integral part of humanity, and with both nations and individuals have an indispensable function to perform, that of self-defense, which, in the present state of civilization, must sometimes be with violence, even with shedding aggressive blood. It is against needless and wicked wars — the vast majority are such — that I have preached; against the abuse ambitious rulers make of the soldier's trained art to kill, and of the wrathful, defensive instincts of the multitude. In this age I think the people do not make war against the peaceful people of another land; nay, in New England, the most democratic country, we have too much neglected the



military art, I fear — a mistake we may bitterly regret in that strife between the Southern habit of despotism, and the Northern principle of democracy, which any day may take the form of civil war, and one day must. For America will not always attempt to carry a pitcher of poison on her left shoulder, and one of pure water on her right; one or the other must soon go to the ground.

7. I have spoken against slavery more than any concrete wrong, because it is the greatest of all, “the sum of all villainies,” and the most popular, the wanton darling of the Government. I became acquainted with it in my early childhood, and learned to hate it even then, when, though I might not comprehend the injustice of the principle, I could yet feel the cruelty of the fact. I began to preach against it early, but used the greatest circumspection, for I knew the vulgar prejudice in favor of all successful tyranny, and wished my few hearers thoroughly to accept the principle of justice, and apply it to this as to all wrongs. But even in the little meeting-house at West Roxbury, though some of the audience required no teaching in this matter, the very mention of American slavery as wicked at first offended all my hearers who had any connection with the Democratic party. Some said they could see no odds between claiming freedom for a negro slave, and “stealing one of our oxen,” the right to own cattle including the right to own men; they thought slavery could ride behind them on the same pillion with “democracy,” according to the custom of their masters. But, as little by little I developed the principle of true democracy, showing its root in that love of your neighbor as yourself, which Jesus both taught and lived, and of that eternal justice,

which comes even to savage bosoms, and showed how repugnant slavery is to both — gradually all the more reflective and humane drew over to the side of freedom; and they who at first turned their faces to the floor of their pews when I announced slavery as the theme for that day's sermon, ere many years turned on me eyes flashing with indignation against wrong, when I told the tale of our national wickedness; they have since given me the heartiest sympathy in my humble efforts to moralize the opinions and practice of the people.

MY FRIENDS,— Since I have been your minister, I have preached much on this dreadful sin of the nation, which now threatens to be also its ruin; for, while in my youth slavery was admitted to be an evil, commercially profitable, but morally wrong, an exceptional measure, which only the necessity of habit might excuse, but which nothing could justify, of late years it is declared a “moral good,” “the least objectionable form of labor,” fit for Northern whites not less than African negroes, one of those guide-board instances which indicate the highway of national welfare. For some years slavery has been the actual first principle of each Federal administration; to this all interests must bend, all customs and statutes conform, and the nation's two great documents, containing our programme of political principles and of political purposes, must be repudiated and practically annulled; the Supreme Court has become only the jesuitical propaganda of slavery.

For some years, while busied with theological matters, and with laying the metaphysic foundation of my own scheme, I took no public part in the anti-slavery movements outside of my own little village. But

when I became your minister, and had a wider field to till, when the ambition of the slave power became more insolent by what it fed upon, and the North still tamer and more servile under the bridle and the whip of such as were horsed thereon, a different duty seemed quite clear to me. I have seldom entered your pulpit without remembering that you and I lived in a land whose church members are not more numerous than its slaves, as many "communing with God" by bread and wine, so many communing with man by chains and whips; and that not only the State, press, and market, but also the Church takes a "South-side view of slavery," as indeed she does of each other wickedness presently popular, and "of good report." Since 1845, I have preached against all the great invasive measures of the slave power, exposing their motive, the first principle they refer to, and showing that they are utterly hostile to that democracy which is justice; and all tend to establish a despotism, which at first may be industrial and many-headed, as now in Louisiana, but next must be single-headed and military, as already in France, and finally must lead to national ruin, as in so many countries of the old world.

In due time the Fugitive Slave Bill came up from seed which wicked men had sown and harrowed into the Northern soil; Boston fired her hundred cannons with delight, and they awoke the ministers, sitting drowsy in their churches of commerce, mid all the pavements of the North, who thought an angel had spoke to them. Then I preached against slavery as never before, and defied the impudent statute, whereto you happily said *Amen* by the first clapping of hands which for years had welcomed a sermon in Boston; how could you help the natural indecorum? When,

roused by these jubilant guns, one minister, so generous and self-devoted, too, in many a noble work, called on his parishioners to enforce that wicked act, which meant to kidnap mine, and declared that if a fugitive sought shelter with him he would drive him away from his own door; when another uttered words more notorious, and yet more flagrant with avaricious inhumanity, which I care not now to repeat again; and when the cry, "No higher law!" went down from the market, and, intoned by the doctorial leaders of the sects, rang through so many commercial churches throughout the Northern land, I did not dare refuse to proclaim the monstrous fact as one of the unavoidable effects of slavery, whose evil seed must bear fruit after its kind, and to gibbet the wrong before the eyes of the people, to whom I appealed for common justice and common humanity. When two men, holding mean offices under the Federal Government, one of them not fit by nature to do a cruel deed, actually stole and kidnapped two innocent inhabitants out from your city of Franklin, and Hancock, and Adams, and attempted, with their unclean, ravenous jaws, to seize yet others, and rend the manhood out of them, I preached against these jackals of slavery and their inhuman work; and have now only to lament that my powers of thought and speech were no more adequate fitly to expose the dark infamy of that foul deed, against which I asked alike the people's justice and their wrath; I knew I should not ask in vain. And when a drunken bully from South Carolina, in Congress, fitly representing the first principle, if not the first persons of his State — where none can serve in even the Lower House of Assembly "unless he be seized in his own right of ten negro slaves" — made



his assault, not less cowardly than brutal, on our noble senator, wounding him with worse than death, and while the United States attorney sought "to make murder safe and easy in the capital," not dreaming it would one day, unpunished, reach his own heart, I spoke of that matter, and showed it was the cowards of Massachusetts who drew the blow on her faithful champion, and that no "anodyne" could make them less than glad that it was struck.

But why speak more of those sad days? Others may come with sterner face, not black, but red. However, a blessed change in public opinion now goes calmly on in Massachusetts, in New England, and all the North, spite of the sophistry and cunning of ambitious men smit with the Presidential fever. The death of a dozen leading anti-slavery men to-day would not much retard it, for the ground is full of such.

8. But I have preached against the errors of the ecclesiastic theology more than upon any other form of wrong, for they are the most fatal mischiefs in the land. The theological notion of God, man, and the relation between them, seems to me the greatest speculative error mankind has fallen into. Its gloomy consequences appear:—Christendom takes the Bible for God's Word, His last word; nothing new or different can ever be expected from the source of all truth, all justice, and all love; the sun of righteousness will give no added light or heat on the cold darkness of the human world. From portions of this "infallible revelation," the Roman Church logically derives its despotic and hideous claim to bind and loose on earth, to honor dead men with sainthood, or to rack and burn with all the engines mechanic fancy can invent, or



priestly cruelty apply ; and hereafter to bless eternally, or else for ever damn. Hence, both Protestant and Catholic logically derive their imperfect, wrathful Deity, who creates men to torment them in an endless hell, "paved with the skulls of infants not a span long," whereinto the vast majority of men are, by the million, trodden down for everlasting agony, at which the elect continually rejoice. Hence, they derive their devil, absolutely evil, that ugly wolf whom God lets loose into His fold of lambs ; hence their total depravity, and many another dreadful doctrine which now the best of men blind their brothers' eyes withal, and teach their children to distrust the infinite perfection which is nature's God, dear Father and Mother to all that is. Hence clerical sceptics learn to deny the validity of their own superior faculties, and spin out the cobwebs of sophistry, wherewith they surround the field of religion, and catch therein unwary men. Hence the Jews, the Mahometans, the Mormons, draw their idea of woman, and their right to substitute such gross conjunctions for the natural marriage of one to one. There the slaveholder finds the chief argument for his ownership of men, and in Africa or New England, kidnaps the weak, his mouth drooling with texts from "the authentic word of God"; nay, there the rhetorician finds reason for shooting an innocent man who but righteously seeks that freedom which nature declares the common birthright of mankind. It has grieved me tenderly to see all Christendom make the Bible its fetish, and so lose the priceless value of that free religious spirit, which communing at first hand with God, wrote its grand pages, or poured out its magnificent beatitudes.

Christendom contains the most intellectual nations

of the earth, all of them belonging to the dominant Caucasian race, and most of them occupying regions very friendly to the development of the highest faculties of man. Theirs, too, is the superior machinery of civilization, political, ecclesiastical, domestic, social. Nowhere on earth does the clerical class so connect itself with the innermost of man. Christendom is the bold leader in all intellectual affairs — arts of peace and war, science, literature, skill to organize and administer mankind. But yet the Christian has no moral superiority over the Jews, the Mahometans, the Brahmans, the Buddhists, at all commensurate with this intellectual power. In the sum of private and public virtues, the Turk is before the Christian Greek. For 1500 years the Jews, a nation scattered and peeled, and exposed to most degrading influences, in true religion have been above the Christians. In temperance, chastity, honesty, justice, mercy, are the leading nations of Christendom before the South-Asiatics, the Chinese, the islanders of Japan? Perhaps so — but have these “Christians” a moral superiority over those “heathens” equal to their mental superiority? It is notorious they have not. Why is this so, when these Christians worship a man whose religion was love to God and love to men, and who would admit to heaven only for righteousness, and send to hell only for lack of it? Because they *worship* him, reject the natural goodness he relied upon, and trust in the “blood of Christ which maketh free from all sin.” It is this false theology, with its vicarious atonement, salvation without morality or piety, only by belief in absurd doctrines, which has bewitched the leading nations of the earth into such practical mischief. A false idea has controlled the strongest spiritual faculty, leading

men to trust in "imputed righteousness," and undervalue personal virtue. Self-denying missionaries visit many a far-off land "to bring the heathens to Christ." Small good comes of it; but did they teach industry, thrift, letters, honesty, temperance, justice, mercy, with rational ideas of God and man, what a conversion there would be of the Gentiles! Two and thirty thousand Christian ministers are there in the United States, all "consecrated to Christ"; many of them are able men, earnest and devoted, but, their eyes hood-winked, and their hands chained by their theology, what do they bring to pass? They scarce lessen any vice of the State, the press, or the market. They are to "save souls from the wrath of God."

I have preached against the fundamental errors of this well-compacted theologic scheme, showing the consequences which follow thence, and seldom entered your pulpit without remembering slavery, the great sin of America, and these theological errors, the sacramental mistake of Christendom. But I have never forgotten the great truths this theology contains, invaluable to the intellect, the conscience, the heart and soul. I have tried to preserve them all, with each good institution which the Church, floating over the ruins of an elder world, has borne across that deluge, and set down for us where the dove of peace has found rest for the sole of her foot, and gathered her olive-branch to show that those devouring waters are dried up from the face of the earth. To me the name of Christianity is most exceeding dear, significant of so great a man and of such natural emotions, ideas, and actions, as are of priceless value to mankind. I know well the errors, also, of the doubters and deniers, who in all ages have waged war against the superstitious the-

ology of their times, and pulled down what they could not replace with better. I have not sat in the seat of the scornful; and while I warned men against the snare of the priest, I would not suffer them to fall into the mocker's pit. I have taken exquisite delight in the grand words of the Bible, putting it before all other sacred literature of the whole ancient world; to me it is more dear when I regard them not as the miracles of God, but as the work of earnest men, who did their uttermost with holy heart. I love to read the great truths of religion set forth in the magnificent poetry of psalmist and prophet, and the humane lessons of the Hebrew peasant, who summed up the prophets and the law in one word of *love*, and set forth man's daily duties in such true and simple speech. As a master, the Bible were a tyrant; as a help, I have not time to tell its worth; nor has a sick man speech for that, nor need I now for my public and private teachings sufficiently abound in such attempts. But yet, to me the great men of the Bible are worth more than all their words; he that was greater than the temple, whose soul burst out its walls, is also greater than the testament, but yet no master over you or me, however humble men.

In theological matters my preaching has been positive, much more than negative, controversial only to create; I have tried to set forth the truths of natural religion, gathered from the world of matter and of spirit; I rely on these great ideas as the chief means for exciting the religious feelings, and promoting religious deeds; I have destroyed only what seemed pernicious, and that I might build a better structure in its place.

Of late years a new form of atheism — the ideal,  
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once thought impossible — has sprung up; perhaps Germany is its birth-place, though France and England seem equally its home. It has its representatives in America. Besides, the pantheists tell us of their God, who is but the sum-total of the existing universe of matter and of mind, immanent in each, but transcending neither, imprisoned in the two; blind, planless, purposeless, without consciousness, or will, or love; dependent upon the shifting phenomena of finite matter and of finite mind, finite itself; a continual becoming this or that, not absolute being, self-subsistent and eternally the same perfection; their God is only law, the constant mode of operation of objective and unconscious force; yet is it better than the churchman's God, who is caprice alone, subjective, arbitrary, inconstant, and with more hate than love. I have attempted to deal with the problem of the pantheist and the atheist, treating both as any other theological opponents; I have not insulted them with harsh names, nor found occasion to impute dishonorable motives to such as deny what is dearer than life to me; nor attempted to silence them with texts from sacred books; nor to entangle them in ecclesiastic or metaphysic sophistries; nor to scare with panic terrors, easily excited in an atheistic or a Christian's heart. I have simply referred them to the primal instincts of human nature, and their spontaneous intuition of the divine, the just, and the immortal; then, to what science gathered from the world of matter, and the objective history of man in his progressive development of individual and of social power. I have shown the causes which lead to honest bigotry within the Christian Church, and to honest atheism without; I hope I have done injustice neither to this nor that. But it was a significant fact



I could not fail to make public, that, while the chief doctors of commercial divinity in the great American trading towns, and their subservient colleges, denied the higher law, and with their Bibles laid humanity flat before the kidnappers in Cincinnati, Philadelphia, New York, and Boston, the so-called atheists and pantheists over all the Northern land revered the instinctive justice of the soul, and said, "Thou shalt not steal, nor lie, thou shalt do no wrong; 'tis Nature's self forbids!"

Preaching such doctrines in a place so public, and applying them to life, I am not surprised at the hostility I have met with from the various sects. In no country would it have been less, or tempered more sweetly; no, nor in any age; for certainly I have departed from the fundamental principle of the Catholics and the Protestants, denied the fact of a miraculous revelation, given exclusively to Jews and Christians, denied the claim to supernatural authority, and utterly broke with that vicariousness which puts an alleged revelation in place of common sense, and the blood of a crucified Jew instead of excellence of character. In the least historic of the New Testament Gospels it is related that Jesus miraculously removed the congenital blindness of an adult man, and because he made known the fact that his eyes were thus opened, and told the cause, the Pharisees cast him out of their synagogue. What this mythic story relates as an exceptional measure of the Pharisees, seems to have founded a universal principle of the Christian Church, which cannot bear the presence of a man who, divinely sent, has washed in the pool of Siloam, and returned seeing and telling why.

I knew at the beginning what I must expect; that at first men younger than I, who had not learned over much, would taunt me with my youth; that others, not scholarly, would charge me with lack of learning competent for my task; and cautious old men, who did not find it convenient to deny my facts, or answer my arguments, would cry out, "This young man must be put down!" and set their venerable popular feet in that direction. Of course I have made many mistakes, and could not expect a theologic opponent, and still less a personal enemy, to point them out with much delicacy, or attempt to spare my feelings; theological warfare is not gentler than political or military; even small revolutions are not mixed with rose-water. The amount of honest misunderstanding, of wilful misrepresenting, of lying, and of malignant abuse, has not astonished me; after the first few months it did not grieve me; human nature has a wide margin of oscillation, and accommodates itself to both torrid and frigid zones. But I have sometimes been a little surprised at the boldness of some of my critics, whose mistakes proved their courage extended beyond their information. An acquaintance with the historic development of mankind, a knowledge of Greek and Hebrew, familiarity with the metaphysic thought of the human race, is certainly no moral merit; but in theologic discussions it is a convenience which some of my opponents have not always paid quite sufficient respect to, though they were not thereby hindered from passing swift judgment. Criticism is the easiest of all arts, or the most difficult of all.

It did not surprise me that other ministers, Unitarian and Trinitarian, should refuse to serve with me on the committee of a college or a school, to attend

the same funeral or wedding, to sit on the same bench at a public meeting, to remain in the same public apartment, and trade at the same book-store, to return my salutation in the street, or reply to my letters; that they should invent and spread abroad falsehoods intended to ruin me; but I confess I have sometimes been astonished that such men "could not see any sign of honesty, of love of truth, of philanthropy, or religion," in my writings or my life, but must set down all to "vanity and love of the praises of men." But "it is fit to be instructed, even by an enemy." Let you and me learn from ours to hate those theological doctrines which can so blind the eyes and harden the hearts of earnest, self-denying men; let us not imitate the sophistry and bigotry we may have suffered from, and certainly have been exposed to.

I have found most friendly recognition where I did not expect it. Men with adverse theological opinions have testified to the honest piety they thought they found in my writings, and joined with me in various practical works of humanity, leaving me to settle the abstract questions of divinity with the Divine himself. Indeed, I never found it necessary to agree with a man's theology before I could ride in his omnibus or buy his quills. No two Unitarian ministers, I think, differ more in their theology than Rev. James Freeman Clarke and I, but for twenty years there has been the warmest friendship between us; that noble man and I have gone hand in hand to many of the most important philanthropies of the age; and I think he will not be offended by this public recognition of our affectional intimacy. I could say similar things of other men, whom I have not named, but might thereby scare their timid reputation from its nest, and addle their hopes of future usefulness.

Besides, I have found kindly and generous critics in America, and still more in England and Germany, who did me perhaps more than justice, while they honestly pointed out what they must regard as my faults. Though I have been written and spoken against more than any American not connected with political parties, yet, on the whole, I do not complain of the treatment I have received; all I asked was a hearing; that has been abundantly granted. You opened wide the doors, my opponents rang the bell all Saturday night, and Sunday morning the audience was there. I think no other country would allow me such liberty of speech; I fear not even England, which has yet so generously welcomed every free thought.

Of late years the hatred against me seems to have abated somewhat; old enemies relaxed their brows a little, and took back, or else denied, their former calumnies; nay, had kind words and kind deeds for me and mine. "Let bygones be bygones," is a good old rule.

"The fondest, the fairest, the truest that met,  
Have still found the need to forgive and forget."

I think few men in America have found sympathy in trouble from a greater variety of persons than I, in my present disappointment and illness, from men and women of all manner of ecclesiastical connections. I could not always thank them by private letters, but I need not say how grateful their kindly words have been, for — I may as well confess it — after all, I am not much of a fighter; my affections are developed far better than my intellect. It may be news to the public; to you it is but too well known.

Yet let it not surprise you that in some quarters this theologic odium continues still, and shows itself in



“revival meetings” by public prayers that God would go to my study, and confound me there so that I could not write my sermon; or meet me in your pulpit, and put a hook in my jaws so that I could not speak; or else remove me out of the world.<sup>4</sup> Such petitions, finding abundant Biblical example, are not surprising when they come from such places, on such occasions, and from men whose mind and conscience are darkened by the dreadful theology that still haunts many such places. But other instances must find a different explanation. Less than two years ago, the senior class in the Cambridge Divinity School, consisting, I think, of but four pupils, invited me to deliver the customary address before them and the public, the Sunday before their graduation. The theological faculty, consisting of three Unitarian doctors of divinity, interposed their veto, and forbid me from speaking; such a prohibition, I think, had never been made before. These doctors were not ignorant men, or bigoted, they attend no “revival meetings,” but, speaking intellectually, they belong among the most enlightened scholars in America; none of them “was ever accused of believing too much”; yet they saw fit to offer me the greatest ecclesiastical, academical, and personal insult in their professional power, in the most public manner, and that, too, at a time when I was just recovering from severe illness, and fluttering ’twixt life and death—the scrutinizing physician telling me the chances were equally divided between the two; I could only stand in the pulpit to preach by holding on to the desk with one hand while I lifted the other up. Others might have expected such treatment from these men; I confess, my friends, that I did not.



Since my present illness began, some of my theological foes have publicly to the world, and privately to me, expressed their delight that I am not likely to trouble them much longer; in my present feebleness they read the answer to their prayers for my removal. It was the Psalmist's petition, "Let not mine enemies triumph over me!" But I shall utter none such. If I fall and die, let "mine enemies" rejoice as much as they will at the consequent thought that there is one feeble voice the less, rebuking the vice of the press, the State, the market, and the Church, to speak a word for truth, freedom, justice, and natural religion; let them be glad there is one weak arm the less reaching out help to the poor, the drunken, the ignorant, the harlot, the felon, and the slave; let them thank God for the premature decrepitude of my voice, the silence of my study, where worms perchance devour my books, more dear even than costly; let them find "answer to our prayers" in the sorrow of my personal friends — there are now many such — in the keen distress of my intimates, and the agony of my wife; I complain nothing thereat. Every tree must bear after its own kind, not another, and their "religion" must yield such fruits. Let them triumph in these results, and thank their God that He has "interposed," and thus granted their petition; it is small satisfaction compared with what they hope for in the next life, where, as their theology teaches, the joy of the elect in heaven will be enhanced by looking down into hell, and beholding the agony of their former neighbors and friends, husband or wife, nay, their own children also, and remembering that such suffering is endless, "and the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever." Let them triumph in this; but let them ex-

pect no other or greater result to follow from my death. For to the success of the great truths I have taught, it is now but of the smallest consequence whether I preach in Boston and all the lyceums of the North, or my body crumbles in some quiet, nameless grave. They are not *my* truths. I am no great man whom the world hinges on; nor can I settle the fate of a single doctrine by my authority. Humanity is rich in personalities, and a man no larger than I will not long be missed in the wide field of theology and religion. For immediately carrying a special measure, and for helping this or that, a single man is sometimes of great value; the death of the general is the loss of the battle, perhaps the undoing of a State; but after a great truth of humanity is once set a-going, it is in the charge of mankind, through whom it first came from God; it cannot perish by any man's death. Neither State, nor press, nor market, nor Church, can ever put it down; it will drown the water men pour on it, and quench their hostile fire. Cannot the Bible teach its worshipers that a grave is no dungeon to shut up truth in; and that death, who slays alike the priest and the prophet, bows his head before her, and passes harmless by? To stone Stephen did not save the church of the Pharisees. A live man may harm his own cause; a dead one cannot defile his clean immortal doctrines with unworthy hands.

In these tropic waters not far off, in time of strife, on a dark night, but towards morning, an English ship-of-war once drew near what seemed a hostile vessel under sail; she hailed the stranger, who answered not, then hailed again, no answer, then fired a shot across the saucy bows; but still there was no reply; next fired at her, amidships, but got not a word in re-

turn. Finally the man-of-war cleared for action, began battle in earnest, serving the guns with British vigor, but found no return, save the rattle of shot rebounding and falling back into the heedless sea. Daylight presently came with tropic suddenness, and the captain found he had spent his powder in battering a great rock in the ocean. So, many a man has fought long against a truth which he fancied was but a floating whim, bound to yield to his caprice; but, at last, the dawning light has shown him it was no passing ship, of timber and cordage and canvas, driven by the wind and tossed by the undulations of the sea, but a sail-rock, resting on the foundations of the world, and amendable neither to the men-of-war that sailed in the wind, nor yet to the undulation of the sea whereon they came and went. It is one thing to rejoice at the sickness and death of a short-lived heretic, but it is another and a little different, to alter the constitution of the universe, and put down a fact of spontaneous human consciousness, which also is a truth of God.

When I first came amongst you, and lived in a trading town where a great variety of occupations lay spread out before me all the time, and preached to such crowds of men as offered a wide diversity of nature, character, and conduct, I found not only an opportunity to work, but also to learn and grow. You say I have taught you much; I hope it is so, but you have been a large part of your own schooling, for I have also learned much from you, the audience has always furnished a large part of the sermon and the prayer. I have received much direct instruction, and that in matters of deep concern, from some of you, by hearing your words and looking at your lives; the in-

direct help to my power of thought and speech, I fear you would hardly credit should I attempt to tell. It is enough to say now, that amongst you I have found men and women, often in quite humble stations, who have added new elements of both strength and beauty to my notion of what constitutes a "glorious human creature," in particular excellencies their actual surpassing my ideal. I have been a learner quite as much as a teacher; indeed, out of nearly a thousand sermons I have written, I think there are not five and twenty which are not also steps in my own development, studies I have learned by, quite as much as lessons you have been taught with.

To me, human life in all its forms, individual and aggregate, is a perpetual wonder; the flora of the earth and sea is full of beauty and of mystery which science seeks to understand; the fauna of land and ocean is not less wonderful; the world which holds them both, and the great universe that folds it on every side, are still more wonderful, complex, and attractive, to the contemplating mind. But the universe of human life, with its peculiar worlds of outer sense and inner soul, the particular faunas and floras which therein find a home, are still more complex, wonderful, and attractive; and the laws which control it seem to me more amazing than the mathematic principles that explain the celestial mechanics of the outward world. The cosmos of matter seems little compared to this cosmos of immortal and progressive man; it is my continual study, discipline, and delight. Oh, that some young genius would devise the "*novum organum*" of humanity, determine the "*principia*" thereof, and with deeper than mathematic science, write out the formulas of the human universe, the celestial mechanics of mankind.



In your busy, bustling town, with its queerly mingled, heterogeneous population, and its great diversity of work, I soon learned to see the unity of human life under all this variety of circumstances and outward condition. It is easy for a simple-hearted man, standing on a central truth, to reduce them all to one common denomination of humanity, and ascertain the relative value of individuals in this comparative morality. The huckster, with a basket, where apples, peanuts, candy, and other miscellaneous small stores are huddled together, is a small merchant; the merchant with his warehouse, his factory, or bank, his ships on many a sea, is a great huckster; both buy to sell, and sell to gain; the odds is quantative, not in kind, but in bulk. The cunning lawyer, selling his legal knowledge and forensic skill to promote a client's gainful wickedness; the tricky harlot, letting out her person to a stranger's unholy lust; the deceitful minister, prostituting his voice and ecclesiastical position to make some popular sin appear decent and Christian, "accordant with the revealed word of God"—all stand in the same column of my religious notation. In the street I see them all pass by, each walking in a vain show, in different directions, but all consilient to the same end.

So, the ambitious vanities of life all seem of nearly the same value when laid side by side on this table of exchange. The poetess, proud of her superiority over other "silly women" in the "vision and the faculty divine," or in but the small "accomplishment of verse"; the orator, glorying in his wondrous art, longer than other men to hold the up-looking multitude with his thread of speech, and thereby pour his thought or will into the narrow vials of so many minds;



and the scavenger, who boasts that he "can sweep round a lamp-post better than any man in the gang" — all seem alike to an eye that looks beneath and above the rippling tide of phenomenal actions, learning its whither and its whence, and knowing the unseen causes which control this many-billowed sea of life. The diamonds of many-skirted Empress Eugénie at Versailles, and the Attleborough jewelry of the bare-footed charwoman Bridget, at Clove Place, are symbols of the same significance, and probably of the same value to their respective occupants. The man not winged with talent, whom a political party cranes up to some official eminence he could not reach by the most assiduous crawling; and the dawdling woman, who can make neither bread to eat nor clothes to wear, nor yet order any household even of only two, whom an idle hand, and a pinkish cheek, and a lolling tongue, have fastened to another, but bearded fool — these seem wonderfully alike to me; and I say to both, "May God Almighty have mercy on your souls!" So, the effort after nobleness of character is ever the same, clad in whatever dress; the black washerwoman, on Negro Hill, as, with a frowzy broom, a mop, and a tub or two, she keeps the wolf away from her unfathered babies, all fugitives from slavery, and thence looks up to that dear God whom she so feels within her heart a very present help in her hour of need, which is her every hour — to me seems as grand as Paul preaching on Mars Hill to the Athenian senators; nay, not less glorious than Jesus of Nazareth on his mountain, uttering blessed Beatitudes to those thousands who paused in their pilgrimage towards Jerusalem, to look and listen to one greater than the temple, and destined to control men's hearts when that city, compactly built,

has not stone left on stone. The thoughtful eye, like the artistic hand, invests with the same magnificence the Hebrew preachers and the negro washerwoman, borrowing the outward purple from the glory within. It is the same great problem of duty which is to be wrought out by all — huckster, merchant, lawyer, harlot, minister, poetess, orator, Eugénie, and Bridget, unworthy officer, and idle, helpless wife, Dinah on Negro Hill, Paul at the Areopagus, and Jesus on Mount Tabor; and it is not of such future consequence to us as men fancy, whether the tools of our work be a basket or a warehouse, a mob or a cross; for the Divine Justice asks the same question of each, “What hast thou done with *thy* gifts and opportunities?” Feeling the democracy of mankind, and preaching it in many a form, I have learned to estimate the worth of men by the quality of their character, and the amount of their service rendered to mankind. So of each I ask but two questions, “What are you? What do you do?” The voluntary beggar in rags, and the voluntary beggar in ruffles, alike answer, “Naught.”

In my preaching I have used plain, simple words, sometimes making what I could not find ready, and counted nothing unclean, because merely common. In philosophic terms, and in all which describes the inner consciousness, our Saxon speech is rather poor, and so I have been compelled to gather from the Greek or Roman stock forms of expressions which do not grow on our homely and familiar tree, and hence, perhaps, have sometimes scared you with “words of learned length.” But I have always preferred to use, when fit, the every-day words in which men think and talk, scold, make love, and pray, so that generous-hearted

philosophy, clad in a common dress, might more easily become familiar to plain-clad men. It is with customary tools that we work easiest and best, especially when use has made the handles smooth.

Illustrations I have drawn from most familiar things which are before all men's eyes, in the fields, the streets, the shop, the kitchen, parlor, nursery, or school; and from the literature best known to all — the Bible, the newspapers, the transient speech of eminent men, the talk of common people in the streets, from popular stories, schoolbooks, and nursery rhymes. Some of you have censured me for this freedom and homeliness, alike in illustration and in forms of speech, desiring: "more elegant and sonorous language," "illustrations derived from elevated and conspicuous objects," "from dignified personalities." A good man, who was a farmer in fair weather and a shoemaker in foul, could not bear to have a plough or a lapstone mentioned in my sermon — to me picturesque and poetic objects, as well as familiar — but wanted "kings and knights," which I also quickly pleased him with. But for this I must not only plead the necessity of my nature, delighting in common things, trees, grass, oxen, and stars, moonlight on the water, the falling rain, the ducks and hens at this moment noisy under my window, the gambols and prattle of children, and the common work of blacksmiths, wheelwrights, painters, hucksters, and traders of all sorts; but I have also on my side the example of all the great masters of speech — save only the French, who disdain all common things, as their aristocratic but elegant literature was bred in a court, though rudely cradled elsewhere, nay, born of rough loins — of poets like Homer, Dante, Shakespeare, Goethe, of Hebrew David, and of Roman

Horace; of philosophers like Socrates and Locke; of preachers like Luther, Latimer, Barrow, Butler, and South; nay, elegant Jeremy Taylor, "the Shakespeare of divines" owes half his beauty to these weeds of nature, which are choicest flowers when set in his artistic garden. But one need not go beyond Jesus of Nazareth and the first three Gospels to learn great lessons in the art of speech; for in him you not only reverence the genius for religion, which intuitively sees divine truth and human duty, but wonder also at the power of speech that tells its tale as deliverly as the blackbird sings or the water runs down hill. Besides, to me common life is full of poetry and pictorial loveliness; spontaneously portrayed, its events will fill my mind as one by one the stars come out upon the evening sky, like them each one "a beauty and a mystery." It is therefore a necessity of my nature that the sermon should publicly reflect to you what privately hangs over it with me, and the waters rained out of my sky when cloudy, should give back its ordinary stars when clear. Yet, for the same reason, I have also fetched illustrations from paths of literature and science, less familiar perhaps to most of you, when they, better than aught else, would clear a troubled thought; so, in my rosary of familiar beads, I have sometimes strung a pearl or two which science brought from oceanic depths, or fixed thereon the costly gems where ancient or modern art has wrought devices dearer than the precious stone itself.

Using plain words and familiar illustrations, and preaching also on the greatest themes, I have not feared to treat philosophic matters with the rigor of science, and never thought I should scare you with statistic facts, which are the ultimate expression of a great



principle doing its work by a constant mode of operation, nor by psychologic analysis, or metaphysical demonstration. Ministers told me I was "preaching over the heads of the people;" I only feared to preach below their feet, or else aside from their ears. Thus handling great themes before attentive men, I have also dared to treat them long, for I read the time not on the dial, but the audience. I trust you will pardon the offense, which I perhaps shall not repeat.

MY FRIENDS,—I said that in my early life I feared the temptations that beset the lawyer's path, and, trembling at the moral ruin, which seemed so imminent, turned to the high ecclesiastic road. Alas! the peril is only different, not less. The lawyer is drawn to one kind of wickedness, the minister to another; their sophistry and cunning are about equal, only in the one case it is practised in the name of "law," and for an obvious "worldly end," and in the other in the name of "gospel," and professedly to secure "salvation." Learning to distinguish sound from significance, I have not found the moral tone of ministers higher than that of lawyers, their motives purer, their behavior more honest, or their humanity more prompt and wide, only their alms are greater in proportion to their purse. In choosing the clerical, not the legal profession, I think I encountered quite as much peculiar peril as I shunned. The gospel-mill of the minister is managed with as much injustice as the law-mill of the other profession.

It is not for me to say I have succeeded in keeping any portion of my youthful vow. Yet one thing I am sure of; I never appealed to a mean motive nor used an argument I did not think both just and true;



I have employed no conscious sophistry, nor ever disguised my ignorance.

Together we have tried some things, which did not prosper, and so came to an end.

We attempted Sunday afternoon meetings, for free discussion of what pertains to religion. I hoped much good from that experiment; yet it was made not only a vanity, but also a vexation of spirit, by a few outsiders, who talked much, while they had little or nothing to say; there could be no wisdom where their voices were heard.

Next we tried lectures on the Bible, Sunday afternoons, which continued during the wintry half of several years. I gave six general lectures on the origin and history of the Old and New Testaments, and then turned to the criticism and interpretation of the several books of the latter. With Tischendorf's edition of the original text in my hand, I translated the three Synoptic Gospels, the four undoubted Epistles of Paul, the Acts, and the "Johannic" writings — Revelation, Gospel, Epistles — explaining each book, verse, and word, as well as I could. I intended to treat all the other canonical and apocryphal books of the New and Old Testaments in the same way. But either the matter was too learned, or the manner too dull, for it did not succeed well, bringing a class of but a few scores of persons. This experiment was abandoned when we removed to the Music Hall, and had no place for an afternoon meeting.

I have long meditated other things, which might, perhaps, be helpful to select classes of young men and women; but as they are now not likely to be more than thoughts, I will not name them here.

Last year you organized your Fraternity: the movement was spontaneous on your part, not originating in any hint of mine. Though I had long wanted such an association, so various in its purposes, and so liberal in its plan, I did not venture to propose it, preferring it should come without my prompting in 1858, rather than merely by it ten years before. A minister as sure of the confidence of his hearers as I am of yours, is often a little inclined to be invasive, and thrust his personality on that of his congregation, making his will take the place of their common sense; hence many trees of clerical planting fail, because they originate only with the minister, and root but into him. I hope great good from this Fraternity, and have laid out much work for myself to do with its help. To mention but one thing, I intended this season to deliver before it ten easy lectures on the first three centuries of the Christian era, and show how the Christianity of the Christians, alas! not the more humane and natural religion of Jesus, developed itself in ideas — the doctrines of the Biblical and patristic books; in institutions — the special churches, each a republic at first, with individual variety of action, but gradually degenerating into a despotic monarchy, with only ecclesiastical unity of action; and finally, after compromising with the Hebrew and classic schemes, how it became the organized religion of the civilized world, a new force in it both for good and evil, the most powerful organization on earth. In my sleepless nights last autumn, I sketched out the plan and arranged the chief details; but it must now pass away, like other less systematic visions of a sick man in his sleep.

When a young man, it was a part of my original plan to leave the practical work of continual preach-

ing, a little before I should be fifty years old, and devote the residue of my life to publishing works which I hoped might be of permanent value, separating the two periods by a year or two of travel in the American tropics and the Mediterranean countries of the Old World; so I thought I might be most useful to mankind, for I did not anticipate or desire long life, and did not originally rate very high my ability to affect the mass of men by direct word of mouth, and made no pretensions to that most popular of intellectual attainments, that eloquence, which, like other beauty, is at once a pleasure and a power, delighting whom it compels. But, when I found the scholarly class more unfriendly than the multitude, I began to think I had chosen the wrong audience to address; that it was the people, not the scholars, who were to lead in philosophic thought; and when you gave me a chance to be heard in Boston, and I preached on from year to year, great crowds of men, who were not readers but workers in the week, coming and continuing to listen to the longest of sermons, wherein great subjects were treated without respect to popular prejudice, ecclesiastical, political, or social, and that, too, without sparing the severest attention of the hearers; when I found these multitudes seemed to comprehend the abstractest reasoning, and truths most universal, and appeared to be instructed, set free, and even elevated to higher hopes both here and hereafter, and to noble character; when, with all my directness of homely speech, I found myself welcome in most of the lecture halls between the Mississippi and the Penobscot, and even beyond them, having thence two or three hundred invitations a year; when the national crisis became nearer and more threatening, and I saw my sentiments and ideas visibly passing into the

opinion and the literature of the people, and thence coming out in the legislation of New England and the other Northern States — I thought it not quite time to withdraw, and my early purposes were a little shaken. I intended to continue some ten years more in severe practical work, till about sixty, then retire, not to lie down in the grave like a camel under his load at night, but hoping to enjoy a long, quiet autumn of twenty years or so, when I might accomplish my philosophic and literary works, and mow up as provender for future time what I had first raised as green grass, and then mowed down to make into sound hay, but have now left, alas! either strewn where it grew, or but loosely raked together, not yet carted into safe barns for the long winter, or even stacked up and sheltered against immediate spoiling by a sudden rain in harvest.

Besides, I felt quickened for practical work by the great exigencies of the nation, the importance of the fight already going on between despotism on one side, with its fugitive slave bills, New England kidnappers and sophists, in bar or pulpit, and democracy on the other, with its self-evident truths, inalienable rights, and vast industrial and educational developments — a battle not yet understood, but destined to grow hot and red ere long — and by the confidence I have always felt in the ultimate triumph of the right and true, the beautiful and good. Moreover, I was encouraged in my course by the soundness and vigor of my bodily frame, not stout, perhaps, and strong, but capable of much and long-continued work of the most various kinds, not tiring soon, nor easily made ill, but quick recovering from both fatigue and sickness; and by the long average life of six generations of American fa-



thers and mothers. But I have now learned by experience that it is not wise to cherish wide personal hopes in a narrow life, or seek to make an apple-tree larger than the orchard.

For some years, I have been warned that I was not only spending the full income of life, but encroaching a little on the capital stock. But what wise man even is always wise? The duties were so urgent, the call for help so imploring, the labor at once so delightful in its process and so prophetic of good results, and I felt such confidence in my bodily power and ancestral longevity, that I did not sufficiently heed the gentle admonition; till, last year, in March, nature at once gave way, and I was compelled to yield to a necessity above my will. I need not tell the fluctuations in my health since then, rather, my friends, let me again thank you for the prompt and generous sympathy you gave then and ever since.

Immediately after my present illness, I left your pulpit empty for a day. You wrote me a letter signed by many a dear familiar name, and but for the haste, I know it had been enriched with the signatures of all; it was dated at Boston, January 11th. Your affection wrote the lines, and a kindred wisdom kept them from me till I was able to bear this unexpected testimonial of your sympathy and love. On Sunday, the 6th of March, while you were listening to — alas! I know not whom you looked to then — my eyes filled with tears as I first read your words of delicate appreciation and esteem. My friends, I wish I were worthy of such reverence and love; that my service were equal to your gratitude. I have had more than sufficient reward for my labors with you; not only have I seen a good work and a great prosper in my hands as you



held them up, but in public, and still more in private, you have given me the sweetest, best of outward consolations — the grateful sympathy of earnest, thoughtful, and religious men. If my public life has been a battle, wherein my head grows bald, my beard turns grey, and my arm becomes feeble, before their time, it has been also a triumph, whose crown is not woven of the red-flowered laurels of war, but of the olive, the lily, the violet, and the white rose of peace. I have no delight in controversy; when assailed, I have never returned the assault; and though continually fired upon for many years from the bar-room and the pulpit, and many another “coigne of vantage” betwixt the two, I never in return shot back an arrow, in private or public, until in the United States Court I was arraigned for the “misdemeanor” of making a speech in Faneuil Hall against that kidnapping in Boston, perpetrated by the public guardian of widows and orphans; then I prepared my *Defense*, which had been abler were I more a lawyer, though less a minister.

To compose sermons, and preach them to multitudes of men of one sort but many conditions, thereto setting forth the great truths of absolute religion, and applying them to the various events of this wondrous human life, trying to make the constitution of the universe the common law of men, illustrating my thought with all that I can gather from the world of matter, its use and beauty both, and from the world of man, from human labors, sorrows, joys, and everlasting hopes — this has been my great delight. Your pulpit has been my joy and my throne. Though press and State, market and meeting-house, have been hostile to us, you have yet given me the largest Protestant audience in America, save that which orthodox Mr.

Beecher, who breaks with no theologic tradition of the New England Church, inspires with his deep emotional nature, so devout and so humane, and charms with his poetic eloquence, that is akin to both the sweet-briar and the rose, and all the beauty which springs up wild amid New England hills, and to the loveliness of common life; I have given you my sermons in return, at once my labor and delight. My life is in them, and all my character, its good and ill; thereby you know me better than I, perhaps, myself — for a man's words and his face when excited in sermon and in prayer tell all he is, the reflection of what he has done. Sermons are never out of my mind; and when sickness brings on me the consciousness that I have naught to do, its most painful part, still by long habit all things will take this form; and the gorgeous vegetation of the tropics, their fiery skies so brilliant all the day, and star-lit too with such exceeding beauty all the night; the glittering fishes in the market, as many-colored as a gardener's show, these Josephs of the sea; the silent pelicans, flying forth at morning and back again at night; the strange fantastic trees, the dry pods rattling their historic bones all day, while the new bloom comes fragrant out beside, a noiseless prophecy; the ducks rejoicing in the long-expected rain; a negro on an ambling pad; the slender-legged, half-naked negro children in the street playing their languid games, or oftener screaming 'neath their mother's blows, amid black swine, hens, and uncounted dogs; the never-ceasing clack of women's tongues, more shrewd than female in their shrill violence; the unceasing, multifarious kindness of our hostess; and, overtowering all, the self-sufficient, West Indian Creole pride, alike contemptuous of toil, and ignorant and impotent of

thought — all these common things turn into poetry as I look on or am compelled to hear, and then transfigure into sermons, which come also spontaneously by night and give themselves to me, and even in my sleep say they are meant for you. Shall they ever be more than the walking of

“A sick man in his sleep,  
Three paces and then faltering?”

The doctors cannot tell; I also know not, but hope and strive to live a little longer, that I may work much more. Oh, that the truths of absolute religion, which human nature demands, and offers, too, from the infinitely perfect God who dwells therein, while He transcends the universe; oh, that these were an idea enlightening all men's minds, a feeling in their hearts, and action in their outward life! Oh, that America's two and thirty thousand ministers, Hebrew, Christian, Mormon, knew these truths, and to mankind preached piety and morality, and that theology which is the science of God and His twofold universe, and forgot their mythologic and misguiding dreams! Then what a new world were ours! Sure I would gladly live to work for this.

I may recover entirely, and stand before you full of brown health, equal to the manifold labors of that position, live to the long period of some of my fathers, and at last die naturally of old age. This to me seems most desirable, though certainly not most probable.

Or, I may so far recover, that I shall falter on a score of years or so, one eye on my work, the other on my body, which refuses to do it, and so urge my weak and balky horse along a miry, broken road. If

this be so, then, in some still, little rural nook, in sight of town, but not too nigh, I may finish some of the many things I have begun, and left for the afternoon or evening of my days; and yet, also, from time to time, meet you again, and, with words of lofty cheer, look on the inspiring face of a great congregation. With this I should be well content; once it was the ideal of my hope.

In either of these cases, I see how the time of this illness, and the discipline alike of disappointment and recovery, would furnish me new power. Several times in my life has it happened that I have met with what seemed worse than death, and, in my short-sighted folly, I said, "Oh, that I had wings like a dove! for then would I fly away and be at rest!" Yet my griefs all turned into blessings; the joyous seed I planted came up discipline, and I wished to tear it from the ground; but it flowered fair, and bore a sweeter, sounder fruit than I expected from what I set in earth. As I look over my life, I find no disappointment and no sorrow I could afford to lose; the cloudy morning has turned out the fairer day; the wounds of my enemies have done me good. So wondrous is this human life, not ruled by fate, but Providence, which is Wisdom, married unto Love, each infinite! What has been, may be. If I recover wholly, or but in part, I see new sources of power beside these waters of affliction I have stooped at; I shall not think I have gone through "the valley of Baca" in vain, nor begrudge the time that I have lingered there, seeming idle; rainy days also help to seed the ground. One thing I am sure of: I have learned the wealth and power of the grateful, generous feelings of men, as I knew them not before, nor hoped on earth to find so rich. High as



I have thought of human nature, I had not quite done justice to the present growth of these beautiful faculties. Here and now, as so oft before, I have found more treasure than I dreamed lay hidden where I looked.

But if neither of these hopes becomes a fact, if the silver cord part soon above the fountain, and the golden bowl be broke, let not *us* complain; a new bowl and a stronger cord shall serve the well of life for you. Though quite aware how probable this seems, believe me, I have not yet had a single hour of sadness; trust me, I shall not. True, it is not pleasant to leave the plough broken in the furrow just begun, while the seed-corn smiles in the open sack, impatient to be sown, and the whole field promises such liberal return. To say farewell to the thousands I have been wont to preach to, and pray with, now joyous, and tearful now — it has its bitterness to one not eighty-four but forty-eight. To undo the natural ties more intimately knit of long-continued friendship and of love — this is the bitter part. But if it be my lot, let not you nor me complain. Death comes to none except to bring a blessing; it is no misfortune to lay aside these well-loved weeds of earth, and be immortal. To you, as a congregation, my loss may be easily supplied; and to me it is an added consolation to know that, however long and tenderly remembered, I should not long be missed; some other will come in my place, perhaps without my defects, possessed of nobler gifts, and certainly not hindered by the ecclesiastical and social hostility which needs must oppose a man who has lived and wrought as I. It will not always be unpopular justly to seek the welfare of all men. Let us rejoice that others may easily reap golden corn where we have but



scared the wild beasts away, or hewn down the savage woods, burning them with dangerous fire, and made the rich, rough ground smooth for culture. It was with grimmer fight, with sourer sweat, and blacker smoke, and redder fire, that the fields were cleared where you and I now win a sweet and easy bread.

What more shall I say to sweeten words of farewell, which must have a bitter taste. If I have taught you any great religious truths, or roused therewith emotions that are good, apply them to your life, however humble or however high and wide; convert them into deeds, that your superior religion may appear in your superior industry, your justice, and your charity, coming out in your housekeeping and all manner of work. So when your

“Course

Is run, some faithful eulogist may say,  
He sought not praise, and praise did overlook  
His unobtrusive merit; but his life,  
Sweet to himself, was exercised in good,  
That shall survive his name and memory.”

Let no fondness for me, now heightened by my illness, and my absence too, blind your eyes to errors which may be in my doctrine, which must be in my life; I am content to serve by warning, where I cannot guide by example. Mortal, or entered on immortal life, still let me be your minister, to serve, never your master, to hinder and command. Do not stop where I could go no further, for, after so long teaching, I feel that I have just begun to learn, begun my work. “No man can feed us always;” welcome, then, each wiser guide who points you out a better way. On earth I shall not cease to be thankful for your patience, which has borne with me so much and long; for

your sympathy, nearest when needed most, and the examples of noble Christian life, which I have found in some of you.

“To whom is given  
The joy that mixes man with Heaven:  
Who, rowing hard against the stream,  
See distant gates of Eden gleam,  
And never dream it is a dream;  
But hear, by secret transport led,  
Even in the charnels of the dead,  
The murmur of the fountain-head:  
Who will accomplish high desire,  
Bear and forbear, and never tire —  
Like Stephen, an unquenched fire,  
As looking upward, full of grace,  
He prayed, and from a happy place  
God's glory smote him on the face!”

Here they add to my joy; perhaps their remembrance will add to my delight in heaven.

May you be faithful to your own souls; train up your sons and daughters to lofty character, most fit for humble duty; and to far cathedral heights of excellence, build up the being that you are, with feelings, thoughts, and actions, that become “a glorious human creature,” by greatly doing the common work of life, heedful of all the charities, which are twice blest, both by their gifts and their forgiveness too. And the Infinite Perfection, the Cause and Providence of all that is, the Absolute Love, transcending the time and space it fills, our Father, and our Mother too, will bless you each beyond your prayer, for ever and for ever. Bodily absent, though present still with you by the immortal part, so hopes and prays.

Your minister and friend,

THEODORE PARKER.

*Fredericksted, West-End, Santa Cruz,*

*April 19th, 1859.*



## **POEMS**





## EVENING

How sweetly from the western sky  
Day's lingering colors fade;  
How changing features softly vie,  
Shade deepening into shade!

How softly comes the grateful calm  
Which mellow evening brings;  
The sweets of flowers, the breath of balm,  
Float on the zephyr's wings!

How soft that wandering cloud appears,  
As the last tinge of day  
Crimsons the peak it proudly wears,  
Then slowly dies away!

Now stars come forth, and one by one,  
In the broad field of night,  
Who veiled their face before the sun,  
Now pour emboldened light.

Oh, night and stars! your voice I hear,  
Swell round the listening pole;  
Your hymns are praises, loud and clear,  
Are music to my soul.

Sing on, sing on, celestial band,  
Till earth repeats your lays,  
Till the wide sea, the sky, the land,  
Shall celebrate his praise!

## THE PILGRIM'S STAR

To me thou cam'st, the earliest lamp of light  
When youthful day must sadly disappear —  
A star prophetic in a world of night,  
Revealing what a heaven of love was near;  
And full of rapture at thy joyous sight,  
I journeyed fearless on the starlight way —  
A thousand other lights came forth so bright,  
But queenliest of all still shone thy ray.

O blessed lamp of Beauty and of Love,  
How long I've watched thee shining far away!  
Now, when the moon has chased the shadows gray,  
Still guided by thy memory forth I rove.  
I'll journey on till dark still lighter prove,  
And Star and Pilgrim meet where all is day.

## TO ———

O, blessed days were these,  
When thou and I together  
Sought through the fields the wild red rose,  
In the golden summer weather!

The lilies bloomed at morning's glow  
On the breast of the winding river;  
I brought to thee their purest snow,  
Less welcome than the giver.

There's beauty in the morning flowers,  
And in the noonday sun;  
Time measures out the golden hours  
With the fairest suns that run.

I know not what it signifies,  
But a single look from thee  
Comes fresher than the morning skies  
Or noonday light to me.

O, people thou my thoughts by day,  
Adorn my dreams by night;  
So cheer my saddened heart away,  
By faith when not by sight.

## GUIDANCE

Through crooked paths thou hast conducted me,  
And thorns oft forced my timid flesh to bleed;  
Still I rejoiced my Leader's hand to see,  
Trusting my Father in my hour of need.  
When in the darkness of my early youth,  
Stumbling and groping for a better way,  
Through riven clouds streamed down the light of  
truth,  
And made it morning with refulgent ray,  
Along the steep and weary path I trod,  
With none to guide, and few to comfort me.  
I felt the presence of the eternal God,  
That in his hand 'twas blessedness to be,  
Finding relief from woes in consciousness of thee.

## GOLDEN WEDDING

SAMUEL MAY AND WIFE

Should youthful courtship be forgot,  
And never brought to min';  
Should youthful courtship be forgot,  
And the days lang syne?

Those days of love we ne'er forget:  
How sweet your lips to mine!  
Your mother did not heed the theft  
In the days lang syne.

A half a hundred years ago  
We stood at wedding shrine:  
We're fifty years the better for  
The days lang syne.

Brown ringlets round your snowy brow,  
That seemed like light to shine;  
Now, changed to gray, they're still more fair  
Than in auld lang syne.

How fond we prayed our lovers' prayer  
I' the moon's romantic shine!  
'Tis deeper now, and tranquillier  
Than in auld lang syne.

We've tasted many a bitter cup  
Of mingled myrrh and wine;  
But the draught has made us stronger far  
Than in auld lang syne.

How vain they talk that age can mar  
The feelings most divine!  
Our hearts now beat with warmer love  
Than in days lang syne.

A willing bride and eager swain  
We stood at wedlock's shrine;  
But other hearts are with us now  
Than of auld lang syne.

Let youthful love be ne'er forgot  
Though a hundred years decline;  
A household now rejoices in  
That day of auld lang syne.

These labor on the blessed earth,  
Those heavenly flowers entwine;  
And we are nearer heaven to-night  
Than of auld lang syne.

And when beyond the grave we rest,  
Where saints in glory shine,  
We'll still look back, and God will bless  
For the days lang syne.

## JESUS

Jesus, there is no dearer name than thine  
Which Time has written on his endless scroll:  
Nor wreaths nor garlands ever did entwine  
So fair a temple of so vast a soul.



Ay, every angel set his glowing seal  
Upon thy brow, and gave each human grace,  
In a sweet copy heaven to reveal,  
And stamp perfection on a mortal face.  
Once on the earth before dull mortal eyes,  
Which could not half thy sacred radiance see,  
E'en as the emmet cannot read the skies,—  
For our weak orbs reach not immensity,—  
Once on the earth wert thou, a living shrine,  
Where dwelt the good, the lovely, the divine.

### THE GOSPEL OF LOVE

“ Oh Brother, who for us didst meekly wear  
The crown of thorns about thy radiant brow;  
What gospel from the Father didst thou bear  
Our hearts to cheer, making us happy now? ”  
“ 'Tis this alone,” the immortal Saviour cries  
“ To fill thy heart with ever active love,—  
Love for the wicked as in sin he lies,  
Love for thy brother here, thy God above.  
Fear nothing ill; 'twill vanish in its day,  
Live for the good, taking the ill thou must;  
Toil with thy might, with manly labor pray  
Living and loving, learn thy God to trust,  
And he will shed upon thy soul the blessings of the  
just.”

## TRIALS

For all the trials of my earlier day

I thank thee, Father, that they all have been;  
That darkness lay about the rugged way

Which I must tread alone. For all I've seen  
Of disappointment, sorrow, pain, and loss,

I thank thee for them all. And did I sin,  
I grieve not I've been tried, for e'en the cross

Of penitence has taught me how to win.

Yet, of the ills as child or man I've borne,—

My hopes laid waste, or friends sent off by death,—  
Remorse has most of all my bosom torn

For time misspent, ill deeds, or evil breath

But yet, for every grief my heart has worn,

Father, I thank thee, trusting still with hearty faith.

## ASPIRATION

Father, I will not ask for wealth or fame

Though once they would have joyed my carnal  
sense:

I shudder not to bear a hated name

Wanting all wealth, myself my sole defense.

But give me, Lord, eyes to behold the truth;

A seeing sense that knows the eternal right;

A heart with pity filled, and gentlest ruth;

A manly faith that makes all darkness light:

Give me the power to labor for mankind,

Make me the mouth for such as cannot speak;

Eyes let me be to groping men and blind;

A conscience to the base; and to the weak

Let me be hands and feet; and to the foolish, mind;

And lead still further on such as thy kingdom seek.

## EVENING HYMN

The chiming of the evening breeze  
That plays among the boughs;  
The ripple of the purple seas  
As night her mantle throws;  
The unveiling of each timid star  
That sheds its beauty from afar,—  
All these have voices for mine ear.

All nature cries, great God! to thee;  
And I will raise my voice,  
Uplift my feeble minstrelsy,  
And bid my heart rejoice.  
Thy sun sheds glory in his light;  
Deep darkness praises thee by night;  
But 'tis thy Spirit makes delight.

Great God! accept the humble praise  
A heart sincere would bring.  
My heart's own anthem 'tis I raise,  
My soul's desire I sing.  
Glory to thee, all gracious Lord!  
For thou dost every gift afford,  
And gladd'st my spirit with thy word.

TO AN UNKNOWN FRIEND WHO SENT  
FLOWERS

Dear child unknown, there came thy Christmas flowers,  
Abloom exotic 'mid December's snow,  
Cheering my heart yet more in these glad hours,  
When naught abroad save piety dares blow.

And yet, my friend, amid a heavier snow,  
A sweeter flower thyself hast been to me.  
'Mid other storms, and in a wintrier woe,  
My flower-glad eyes were satisfied with thee.  
Thy comfort brought into my bosom glee,  
Yea, confidence and trust thy look did lend,  
When else in vain I sought tranquillity.  
Thus, daughter, sister, mother, wife, and friend,  
To one long nursed in grief's perplexity,  
Little know'st thou what healing cheer thy words  
could send.

## JESUS

Oh, thou great friend to all the sons of men,  
Who once appeared in humblest guise below,  
Sin to rebuke and break the captive's chain,  
To call thy brethren forth from want and woe,—  
Thee would I sing. Thy truth is still the light  
Which guides the nations — groping on their way,  
Stumbling and falling in disastrous night,  
Yet hoping ever for the perfect day:  
Yes! thou art still the Life, thou art the Way  
The holiest know,— Light, Life and Way of Heaven!  
And they who dearest hope and deepest pray,  
Toil by the Light, Life, Way, which thou hast given.  
And by thy truth aspiring mortals trust  
To uplift their bleeding brothers from the dust.

## HUMAN MISERY, HEAVENLY RELIEF

The saddening sense of human woe is deep  
Within my heart, and deepens daily there.  
I see the want, despair and wretchedness  
Of smarting men, who wear, close pent in towns,  
The galling load of life; the rich, the poor,  
The drunkard, criminal, and they that make  
Him so, and fatten on his tears and blood.  
I bear their sorrows, and I weep their sins:—  
Would I could end them! No: I see before  
My race an age or so; and I am sent  
For the stern work, to hew a path among  
The thorns — I take them in my flesh — to tread  
With naked feet the road, and smooth it o'er  
With blood, and fainting, I shall lay my bones  
In some sharp crevice of the broken way.  
Men shall in better times stand where I fell,  
And journey singing on in perfect bands,  
Where I have trod alone, no arm but God's,  
No voice but his. Enough! — His voice, his arm.

## THE GOOD SHEPHERD

Yes, holy one, thou the good Shepherd art,  
Enduring hardest service for thy sheep,  
Hearing their bleatings with a human heart,  
Not losing such as thou wert put to keep;  
But feeble wanderers from the field astray  
Thou on thy shoulders takest, and dost bear  
From hireling thieves and murdering wolves away,



And watchest o'er them with a guardian care.  
Thou art the human Shepherd of the sheep,  
Leading them forth to pasture all the day,  
At night to folds which them in safety keep  
Thou Light and Life from God, to Heaven the Way,  
And giving at the last, thy own, thy well-beloved,  
sleep.

## ODE

TO COMMEMORATE THE FIRST ANNIVERSARY OF THE  
SURRENDER OF THOMAS SIMS

Sons of men who dared be free  
For truth and right who cross'd the sea,  
Hide the trembling poor that flee  
From the land of slaves!

Men that love your father's name,  
Ye who prize your country's fame,  
Wipe away the public shame  
From your native land!

Men that know the mightiest Might,  
Ye who serve the eternal Right,  
Change the darkness into light —  
Let it shine for all!

Now's the day, and now's the hour;  
See the front of thralldom lower,  
See advance the Southern power,  
Chains and slavery!

See the kidnappers have come!  
Southern climes surround your home;  
Will you wait for harsher doom?  
Will you wear the chain?

By yon sea that freely waves,  
By your father's honored graves,  
Swear you never will be slaves,  
Nor steal your fellow man!

By the heaven whose breath you draw,  
By the God whose higher law  
Fills the heaven of heavens with awe;  
Swear for freedom now!

Men whose hearts with pity move,  
Men that trust in God above,  
Who stoutly follow Christ in love,  
Save your brother men!

## WEBSTER

1850

Wayfarer, pause! for late there stooped and fell  
One of earth's mightiest minds, and now,  
Stained and dishonored lies that ample brow  
Wherein the nation dreamed there slept a spell  
To stay the ancient fiend that overthrew  
Athena, Corinth and wide-grasping Rome,  
With every state where freedom sought a home,  
Threw down her altars and her prophets slew.  
But vainly gazed the nation on that brow;  
Vainly they asked that kingly mind for aid:  
The new Iscariot freedom's trust betrayed.

Go, passer-by! to men this warning tell:  
The loftiest mind, scorning God's justice, fell.

## THE MISSION OF JESUS

Dear Jesus, were thy spirit now on earth,  
Where thou hast toiled and wept a world to win,  
What vast ideas would sudden come to birth?  
What strong endeavors 'gainst o'ermastering sin,  
Thy blessed beatitudes again thou'dst speak;  
And with deep-hearted words that smite like fire,  
Wouldst thou rebuke the oppressors of the weak.  
But, turning thence to prophets that aspire,  
How wouldst thou cheer the souls that seek to save  
Their brethren smarting 'neath a despot's rod;  
To lift the poor, the fallen and the slave,  
And lead them all alive to worship God!  
Bigots wouldst thou refuse that hindering stand  
But send thy gospel-fraught apostles conquering  
through the land.

## ALMIGHTY LOVE

In darker days and nights of storm,  
Men knew thee but to fear thy form:  
And in the reddest lightnings saw  
Thine arm avenge insulted law.

In brighter days we read thy love  
In flowers beneath, in stars above;  
And in the track of every storm  
Behold thy beauty's rainbow form.

And in the reddest lightning's path  
We see no vestiges of wrath,  
But always wisdom — perfect love,  
From flowers beneath to stars above.

See, from on high sweet influence rains  
On palace, cottage, mountains, plains!  
No hour of wrath shall mortals fear,  
For their Almighty Love is here.

## PRAYER

O thou Eternal One, may I commune  
With thee, and for a moment bathe my soul  
In thy infinity, Mother and Sire  
Of all that are? In all that is art thou;  
Being is but by thee, of thee, in thee;  
Yet, far thou reachest forth beyond the scope  
Of space and time, or verge of human thought.

Transcendent God! Yet, ever immanent  
In all that is, I flee to thee, and seek  
Repose and soothing in my Mother's breast.  
O God I cannot fear, for thou art love,  
And wheresoe'er I grope I feel thy breath!  
Yea, in the storm which wrecks an argosy,  
Or in the surges of the sea of men  
When empires perish, I behold thy face,  
I hear thy voice, which gives the law to all  
The furies of the storm, and Law proclaims,  
"Peace, troubled waves, serve ye the right — be still!"  
From all this dusty world thou wilt not lose  
A molecule of earth, nor spark of light.  
I cannot fear a single flash of soul  
Shall ever fail, outcast from thee, forgot.  
Father and Mother of all things that are,  
I flee to thee, and in thy arms find rest.  
My God! how shall I thank thee for thy love!  
Tears must defile my sacramental words,  
And daily prayer by daily penitence  
For actions, feelings, thoughts which are amiss:  
Yet will I not say, "God, forgive!" for thou  
Hast made the effect to follow cause, and bless  
The erring, sinning man. Then, let my sin  
Continual find me out, and make me clean  
From all transgression, purified and bless'd!



## A GARDEN

FROM THE GERMAN

On the pinions of the muses,  
My dearest, thee I bear  
To the banks of holy Ganges,  
Where I know the spot most fair.

A rosy-blooming garden  
Lies in still moonlight there;  
The lotus flowers are waiting  
Their little sister dear.

The violets are billing and cooing,  
And look to the stars above;  
In secret the roses whisper  
Their fragrant story of love.

There comes to leap and listen  
The shy and cunning gazelle  
And far on the holy river  
The waters rush and swell.

There 'neath a palm we'll lay us,  
Beside the holy stream,  
And drink of love and quiet,  
And dream a blessed dream.

## LANGUAGE OF THE EYES

FROM THE GERMAN OF BÜCKERT

Oh, not in many languages  
My youthful love rejoices,  
But with her eyes she better speaks  
Than others with their voices.

Oh, what a copious stock of words  
In this open letter treasured!  
A single glance, a paragraph  
Of meaning all unmeasured.

Artists have painted Love as blind;  
Dumb were he better painted,  
The pains of silence done away  
By speech the eyes invented.

That is the only speech among  
The blessed stars in heaven;  
And flowers discourse it in the spring  
From morning until even.

That is the speech whose character,  
With rays of stars eternal,  
Is written by the pen of love,  
And shines through space supernal.

This language not by mind is known,  
But better by emotion;  
Therefore, Love only speaks in this  
On every land and ocean.

## THE SPHINX

FROM THE GERMAN OF HEINE

This is the old poetic wood;  
The linden's breath comes stealing;  
And glancing wondrously the moon  
Enchanteth every feeling.

I walked therein, and as I went  
Above I heard a quiring;  
It was the nightingale; she sang  
Of love and love's desiring.

She sang of love and of love's woe,  
Of laughter and of weeping;  
She joy'd so sadly, plain'd so gay,  
That dreams came back from sleeping.

I walked therein, and as I went,  
Before me saw, expending  
In ample space, a castle huge,  
Its gables high ascending;

Windows were closed, and everywhere  
A silence and a mourning,  
As if in those deserted walls  
Was quiet death sojourning.

Before the door a sphinx there lay,  
Part joy, part fear, half human;  
Body and claws a lion's were,  
The breast and head, a woman,—

A woman fair; her pallid face  
Spoke of most wild desiring;  
The silent lips were arched with smiles,  
A tranquil trust inspiring.

The nightingale, too, sweetly sang.  
Could I resist her? Never!  
But as I kissed the handsome face,  
My peace was gone forever!

Living became the marble form,  
The stone began to shiver,  
She drank my kisses' fiery glow  
With thirsty lips that quiver.

She almost drank away my breath,  
And then, with passion bending,  
She coil'd me round, my mortal flesh  
With lion-talons rending.

Ecstatic torture, woeful bliss!  
Joy, anguish, without measure!  
And while the talons grimly tear,  
Her kisses give such pleasure!

The nightingale sang, " Handsome sphinx!  
O Love, what is intended —  
That all thy bless'd beatitudes  
With death-throes thou hast blended?

Oh, handsome sphinx, come, solve for me  
The riddle, tell the wonder!  
For many a thousand years thereon  
Thought I, and still I ponder."

## WHEN WE WERE CHILDREN

FROM THE GERMAN OF HEINE

My child, when we were children,  
Two children small and gay,  
We crept into the hen-house,  
And hid us under the hay.

We crowed as do the cockerels,  
When people passed the wood,  
"Ki-ker-ki!" and they fancied  
It was the cock that crow'd.

The chests which lay in the court-yard,  
We paper'd them so fair,  
Making a house right famous,  
And dwelt together there.

The old cat of our neighbor  
Oft came to make a call;  
We made her bow and courtesy,  
And compliment us all.

We ask'd with friendly question,  
How she was getting on;  
To many an ancient pussy  
The same we since have done.

In sensible discoursing  
We sat like aged men,  
And told how, in our young days,  
All things had better been.



That faith, love and religion  
From earth are vanish'd quite ;  
And told how dear is coffee,  
And money is so tight.

But gone are childish gambols,  
And all things fleeting prove ;  
Money, the world, our young days,  
Religion, truth and love.

### THE LITTLE FLOWER

FROM THE GERMAN OF HEINE

Thou art a little flower,  
So pure and fair and gay,  
I look on thee and sadness  
Steals to my heart straightway.

My hands I feel directed  
Upon thy head to lay,  
Praying that God may keep thee,  
So pure and fair and gay.

## MOHNIKE, IN WILHELM'S LYRIK

A light skiff swam on Danube's tide,  
Where sat a young man and his bride:  
    He this side, she that side.

Quoth she, "Heart's dearest, tell to me  
What wedding gift I'll give to thee?"

Upward her little sleeve she strips,  
And in the water briskly dips.

The bridegroom did the same straightway,  
And played with her and laughed so gay.

"Oh, give to me Dame Danube fair,  
Some pretty toy for my bride to wear."

She drew therefrom a handsome blade,  
For which the young man long had prayed.

The groom, what holds he in his hand?  
Of milk-white pearls a costly band.

He turns it round her raven hair;  
She looked like any princess there.

"Dame Danube fair, to me impart  
Some pretty toy for my sweetheart."

A second time her arm dips in,  
A glittering helm of steel to win.

The youth, o'er-joyed the prize to view,  
Brings her a golden comb thereto.

A third time she in the water dipped,  
Ah, woe! from out the skiff she slipped.

He springs and grasps, alas, the day!  
Dame Danube tears them both away.

The Dame to use her toys began,  
Therefore must perish maid and man.

The empty skiff floats down alone;  
Behind the hills soon sinks the sun.

And when the moon stood overhead,  
To land two lovers floated, dead:  
    He this side, and she that side.

FRAGMENT FROM GEIBEL'S "TANN-  
HÄUSER"

Now is the night so joyous,  
    Now blooms so rich the wold,  
And on all hill-tops whisper  
    Such voices manifold!  
The streamlets twinkle and glisten,  
    The flowers give fragrance and light;  
The marble statues listen  
    In the dark green of the night.

The nightingale singeth, "Beware, beware!"  
The boy looks forth, and forth will fare;  
Wild beats his heart — he heedeth not:  
What once he loved is all forgot.

A castle in the garden:  
With light the windows glance,  
At the door are pages waiting,  
Above resounds the dance.  
Up the stairway he is leaping,  
He enters in the hall;  
There are silken garments sweeping,  
There gleams the gold pokal.

The nightingale singeth, "Beware, beware!"  
The boy looks forth, and forth will fare;  
Wild beats his heart — he heedeth not;  
What once he loved is all forgot.

The fairest of the women  
Holds out to him the glass,  
While cool, delicious shudders  
Through soul and body pass.  
He drains the magic measure,  
The door dwarf answers shrill,  
"Now, boy, thou art our pleasure:  
This is Dame Venus' hill."

The nightingale singeth, but from afar;  
The boy is drawn by his evil star;  
Wild beats his heart — he heedeth not:  
What once he loved is all forgot.

## MY DARLING

FROM THE GERMAN OF HEINE

Thou hast diamonds and jewels,  
Hast all that mortals adore,  
And eyes thou hast most handsome;  
My darling, what would'st thou more?

Upon thine eyes so handsome  
I've written many a score  
Of poems, all immortal;  
My darling, what would'st thou more?

And with thine eyes so handsome  
Thou hast tortured me full sore,  
And hast me ruined utterly;  
My darling, would'st thou more?

## THE WANDERER

FROM THE GERMAN OF HEINE

Many a form of days forgotten  
Arose from out its grave,  
Again to show me clearly  
What life thy presence gave.

By day I wandered dreaming —  
Through all the streets I'd range;  
Men looked astonished on me,  
I was so sad and strange.



At night it all went better,  
For then the streets were clear;  
I and my ghost together,  
We wandered silent there.

On the bridge, with echoed footsteps,  
My rambling way I took;  
The moon broke through the night-clouds,  
Greeting with serious look.

I stood before thy dwelling,  
And gazed upon the sky,  
And gazed upon thy window:  
My heart beat wild and high.

I know that oft the window  
Thou'st open'd with thy hand,  
And seen me in the moonlight,  
Like a marble statue stand.

#### FROM THE RUSSIAN

Moaning, moaning, through the oak wood,  
Clouds the field all overhanging,  
Her only son drives forth the mother:  
"Hence thou son, out of my cottage,  
Thee may cruel Moslems capture!"  
"Oh, well remember me the Moslems,  
Offer me the dearest horses."

Moaning, moaning, through the oak wood,  
Clouds the field all overhanging,  
Her only son drives forth the mother:

"Hence, my son, out of my cottage,  
Thee may cruel Tartars capture."

"Oh, well remember me the Tartars,  
Offer me most precious garments."

Moaning, moaning, through the oak wood,  
Clouds the field all overhanging,  
Soft her darling clasps the mother:

"Come, my son, come to my cottage,  
Thy fair hairs let me comb over!"

"Mother, oh, the rain will wash me,  
And the thickest thorn-bush comb me;  
The sharp winds know how to dry me."

Brings his steed the oldest sister,  
And the second brings the weapons;  
Of her brother asks the youngest:  
"When return'st thou from the battle?"

"Take thou up of sand a handful,  
Strew it then upon the ledges,  
And bedew it still with weeping,  
By the morning star just shining;  
When the sand shall blossom, sister,  
Then shall I return from battle."

## THE FAREWELL

FROM THE GERMAN OF HEINE

The lindens were blooming, the nightingale sung,  
The sun smiled on us with friendliest fire,  
You kissed me so, then, and your arms round me flung,  
And clasped to your bosom that throbbed with desire.

The raven croaked dull, the leaves they all fell,  
The sunlight salutes us gloomily now,  
We frostily said to each other, Farewell,  
And courtly you bow'd me the courtliest bow.

## FROM MARTIN OPITZ

Come, dearest, let us hasten  
While time is ours ;  
Delay is fast consuming  
All of our powers.

The noblest gifts of beauty  
Fly wing and wing,  
And all that one possesses  
Is vanishing.

The rosy cheek is paling,  
The hair turns gray ;  
The eye's bright fire is failing ;  
The breast is clay.

That dainty mouth of coral  
Will soon be cold,  
Those hands, like snow, hang heavy,  
And thou'lt be old.

Then let us seize, in rapture,  
Youth's fruit of gold,  
Before we're called to follow  
Years that are told.

As thou thine own self lovest,  
Love me as true ;  
Give me — what else thou givest,  
That love I, too.

#### HYMN NO. 1400 IN CHEVALIER BUNSEN'S COLLECTION

The gloomy night is gathering in,  
The day's sweet light is dead ;  
Oh, then, my soul, sleep not in sin,  
Commune with God instead !

Oh God, the world's eternal Lord,  
Whom no one can perceive,  
Thou seest me daily in thy tent ;  
Wilt thou my prayer receive ?

The daylight which is ended now,  
In chief belongs to thee,  
And so ought I, from morn till night,  
Thy holy servant be.

Perhaps my duty is not done,  
For I am flesh and blood;  
And trespass ere the day is gone,  
Although the will be good.



## NOTES



## NOTES

### AN AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL FRAGMENT

This fragment of an autobiography was commenced by Theodore Parker at Rome with the object of entrusting it, when finished, to his friend Mr. Lyman, to be used by him some day. It appeared in Weiss's *Life of Theodore Parker*, pp. 17-26. It is printed here in its original condition, except that a few pages of botanical matter have been omitted. When Parker found that he could write no more, he closed the manuscript with the following note to the reader.

"N. B. *Caveat Lector*. This will require careful re-writing, and, as it stands, may contain many errors of detail, for I write it when too ill to read, and with no memoranda to aid me. I should like to consult the deeds of the early settlers in my neighborhood, to learn the original ownership of land, the date of the houses, and the names of places like 'the great meadow.' Few men, if any, now living will remember the name, but I have found it in old deeds.

"I began this at Rome, March 16, 1860. It is not likely I shall get far in it. I have waited more than a year for strength to begin it, and now commence at my weakest point.

"The material and human circumstances about a man in his early life have a strong and abiding influence upon all, especially on those of a sensitive disposition, who are both easily affected by such externals and rather obstinate in retaining the impression made on them."

## THE TRUE IDEA OF A CHRISTIAN CHURCH

This discourse was given at the installation of Theodore Parker as minister of the Twenty-Eighth Congregational Church in Boston, January 4, 1846.

The installation of Theodore Parker as minister of the Twenty-Eighth Congregational Church in Boston, at the Melodeon, on January 4, 1846, was a very simple event, characteristic of the man and the congregation over which he was called to preside. The hall was filled by a large audience. No clergymen were invited to participate in the proceedings, and the formalities commonly regarded as essential to such an occasion were dispensed with.

An introductory hymn was sung by the choir, and a prayer was made by Mr. Parker, followed by a voluntary on the organ. The chairman of the standing committee then addressed the congregation as follows:

“By the instructions of the society, the committee have made arrangements with Mr. Parker by which the services of this society under the new organization should commence with the new year; and this being our first meeting, it has been set apart for such introductory services as may seem proper for our position and prospects.

“The circumstances under which this society has been formed and its progress hitherto are familiar to most of those present. It first began from certain influences which seemed hostile to the cause of religious freedom. It was the opinion of many of those now present that a minister of the gospel truly worthy of that name was proscribed on account of his opinions, branded as a heretic, and shut out from the pulpits of the city. At a meeting of gentlemen, held January 22, 1845, the following resolution was passed: ‘*Resolved*, that the Reverend Theodore Parker shall have a chance to be heard in Boston.’

“To carry this into effect, this hall was secured for a place of meeting, and the numbers who have met here from Sunday to Sunday have fully answered our most sanguine expectations. Our meetings have proved that though our friend was shut out from the temples, yet ‘the people heard him gladly.’ Of the effect of his preaching among us I need not speak. The warm feelings of respect and gratitude expressed on every side are the best evidence of the efficacy of his words and of his life. Out of these meetings our society has naturally sprung. It became necessary to assume some permanent form. The labor of preaching to two societies would of course be too much for Mr. Parker’s health and strength. The conviction that his settlement in Boston would be not only important for ourselves, but also for the cause of liberal Christianity and religious freedom, impelled us to action. These were some of the reasons which induced us to form a society and invite him to become its minister. To this he has assented, with the understanding that the connection may be dissolved by either party on giving six months’ notice to that effect.

“At Mr. Parker’s suggestion, and with the warm approval of the committee, we have determined to adopt the old congregational form of settling our minister, without the aid of bishop, churches, or ministers. As to our choice, we are, after mature reflection, and after a year’s trial, fully persuaded that we have found our minister, and we ask no ecclesiastical council to ratify our decision. As to the charge usually given on such occasions, we prefer to do without it, and trust to the conscience of our minister for his faithfulness. As to the right hand of fellowship, there are plenty of us ready and willing to give that, and warm hearts with it. And for such of the other ceremonies usual on such occasions as Mr. Parker chooses to perform, we gladly accept the substitution of his services for those of any stranger.



“The old Puritan form of settling a minister is for the people to do it themselves, and this let us now proceed to do. In adopting this course, we are strongly supported both by principle and precedent. Congregationalism is the republicanism of the church; and it is fitting that the people themselves should exercise their right of self-government in that most important particular, the choice and settlement of a minister. For example, I need only remind you of the settlement of the first minister in New England, on which occasion this form was used, and that it is also used at this day by one of the most respectable churches of this city.”

The society then ratified the proceedings by a unanimous vote, and Mr. Parker publicly signified that he adhered to his consent to become the minister of this society, and the organization of the society was thus completed.

A hymn was sung, and Mr. Parker then delivered his discourse, which was followed by an anthem, and a benediction concluded the services.

*Page 38, note 1.* Rev. John Pierpont, for many years minister of the Hollis Street Church, was driven out on account of his advocacy of various reforms. He preached especially against intemperance and slavery, and greatly offended certain of his parishoners who were distillers and rumsellers, who claimed that these “exciting topics” should not be discussed in the pulpit. He stoutly maintained his ground for several years, was not sustained by the clergy in general, and finally was compelled to leave the position he had so long and ably filled.

#### SOME ACCOUNT OF MY MINISTRY

This sermon and the one which follows were preached before the Twenty-Eighth Congregational Society in Boston, on the 14th and 21st of November, 1852, on

leaving their old and entering a new place of worship.

*Page 66, note 1.* The term *hunker* was first used in the State of New York about 1845, and applied as a name to the conservative section of the Democratic party, who opposed the "Barnburners" or radical section. It was frequently used by Mr. Parker, not in a political sense, but as indicating a person selfish and arrogant, who assumed to be superior to the "common herd," and to dictate to and manage them; a "bloated aristocrat," a vain and self-sufficient, purse-proud fellow, lacking in humanity and well filled with self-conceit. These were hunkers in Church and State, and in various branches of business.

*Page 73, note 2.* Here Parker makes note that there was one exception: "Abusive letters from South Carolina were uniformly post-paid. Such anonymous letters I never read."

*Page 77, note 3.* The theological intolerance manifested against Mr. Parker in this country did not appear to any great extent in England or elsewhere in Europe. The foreign thinkers were quick to perceive the drift of his mind, and very enthusiastic to recognize his capacity for entertaining righteousness. Many of the clergy welcomed his views, and acknowledged their indebtedness to him, and where there was a difference on points of doctrine, it did not blind them to his greatness as a scholar and a humanitarian. His books were largely read, and fairly criticised. After his death he was warmly eulogized in sermons and addresses, and several biographies appeared, full of enthusiastic praise for his lofty character and wonderful accomplishments in many lines of service.

James Martineau says of him in the *Prospective Review* for February, 1846: "Gladly do we gird up our hearts to follow the bold and noble steps of Theodore Parker over the ample province of thought which he

traverses in his 'Discourse of Religion' . . . The purity and depth of his conceptions of character, his intense abhorrence of falsehood and evil, the moral loftiness of his devotion and the generous severity of his rebuke are in the strongest contradiction to the serene complacency of a mind suspended in metaphysic elevation *above* the point where truth and error, right and wrong, diverge, and looking down from a station whence all things appear equally divine."

A writer in the *Westminster Review*, one of the great English quarterlies, in a review of the "Discourse of Religion" in 1847, says: "Parker writes like a Hebrew prophet, enriched by the ripe culture of the modern world. . . . Listening to the American reformer, you stand before a man of high and devout genius, who disposes of his wealth of erudition in the service of religion."

Dean Stanley, in an article on the "Historical Aspect of the American Churches," in *Macmillan's Magazine*, not long before his death, says: "He must be regarded as the first pioneer on the transatlantic continent of those larger views of critical inquiry and religious philosophy which have so deeply influenced all the churches of the Old World."

When he visited America, he said, "Theodore Parker has contributed more to theological progress than any other religious thinker of the century."

Rev. Peter Deem in the preface to his book, "Life and Teachings of Theodore Parker," says: "This book is the offspring of gratitude and duty. Personally I have received greater spiritual good from the life and doctrines of its subject than from those of any other teacher or exemplar."

Richard Ackland Armstrong in a series of lectures on "Latter Day Teachers," refers to Theodore Parker as a "bright and shining light in the constellations of the spiritual heavens."

Rev. William Henry Channing, in 1860, then preaching in Liverpool, thus speaks of Theodore Parker: "Doing with might what his hand found to do lived Theodore Parker — living the lives of many men in one, living too fast, and dying too soon, leaving a void that all now mourn and none can fill. He was truly great,— great by endowment, self-discipline and culture, by providential training and the wise use of opportunities, by high positions bravely won, and by ever-widening influence. He was great in character and conduct, in genius and accomplishment. He was great in the ends he sought, in his principles and modes of action, and in the spirit of his life. His fame is great, even now, though he fell exhausted by excessive toil in mid career, ere half his work was done. And henceforth his name will shine amidst the great historic names of his nation. Due distance from our compeers enables us to measure their aims and achievements, so as in some degree to anticipate the judgment of futurity. And thus looking from Old England towards New England, I clearly discern that Theodore Parker stands conspicuously eminent among the greatest of his generation in the United States."

Rev. Philip William Perfit, in a discourse occasioned by the death of Theodore Parker, says: "There was a fountain of spiritual truth in his nature, and bounteously he lavished the richest thoughts upon his hearers. His discourses are so filled with this truth, clothed in language of the greatest beauty, combined with power and grace, that we may say of them, they are equal to every want, and that he who possesses them



will scarcely need any other religious books. There is no straining after rhetorical effect, no mere piling of words wherewith, as is common, to hide the poverty of ideas, but he rushes on from thought to thought, and gives in one discourse more real and substantial matter than many give in a volume."

Rev. Henry N. Barnett pays him this fine tribute: "His spiritual life has its fountains and its sanctities, not in the traditions, creeds and customs of the churches, but in the depths of his own spiritual nature. He lived from within, not from without. No vicarious, artificial or ceremonious sanctities molded his spirit, controlled his conduct, or prescribed his destiny. His thoughts, beliefs, devotions, his hopes, aspirations, assurances, his own exertions, sacrifices, his purposes, methods and plans were his own, dictated only by his own conscience, governed only by his own judgment, warranted only by his own nature, consecrated freely to his own salvation. He revered the traditional, but not the dust in which it was enshrined. He loved the ancient saints, not for the titles bestowed upon them by the manufacturers of a sinister calendar, but for the radiant virtues that made them strong while they lived and the unquenchable piety that gave them immortality. The prophets he revered, not because ecclesiastical tribunals pronounced them divine, but because they had borne the testimony of their protests, their sorrows, and their blood to the everlasting justice of God and the outraged rights and responsibilities of mankind. He called no man master, but with the beautiful modesty of true righteousness he preserved his mind free from every ghastly enslavement, that it might more freely dedicate itself to the simple services of earth and heaven. Never had man more catholic heart than he. His sympathies were comprehensive as the face of the world, and as warm as the instincts of humanity. He



was a glorious heretic who could afford by the fruitfulness and glowing ecstasies of his own religious life, to brave the terrors which the churches of his day might try to heap upon him, and he, the one man,—assured, calm, courteous, resolute, fearless, mighty,—stood up against the combined priestly forces of his time, and taking their doctrines, one by one, set the true on his right hand, and the false on his left, even as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats, and having achieved his imperial discrimination, in spite of entreaty, deprecation, condemnation, persecution, malediction; turning to the mischief-makers of his generation, he declared their creed to be a lie, their discipline a tyranny, their worship a corruption, and their domination a curse.”

Archdeacon Wolff of Kiel, the translator of the “Discourse of Religion,” says of him: “Is it Parker’s aspiration for the true and holy, is it the child-like love with which he bows before the works of God, and lies low in the bosom of Nature, is it the genuine human mildness with which he judges the faults and weaknesses of men, is it the noble justice with which he willingly acknowledges and brings into prominence whatever is good and praiseworthy in an opponent, is it the manly courage which never trembles before truth, is it the profound learning which is bottomed on researches the most widely extended, is it the one or the other, or is it the impression which all these together make on the reader, which leads us to admire and appreciate him? I never read such language, and do not doubt it will affect all others in the same way.”

Rev. Albert Réville, a French pastor, who greatly appreciated Parker, and wrote a life of him, has this estimate of him: “Happy the churches who shall find in their essential principles the right to open themselves

without resolution to that imperishable Christianity of which Theodore Parker was the inspired preacher! The fundamental truth which he maintained, namely, that in the last analysis everything rests on conscience; that God reveals Himself to whosoever seeks after Him; that the salvation of man and society, on earth as well as in heaven, depends not on dogmas, not on rites, not on miracles, not on priesthoods, nor on books, but on 'Christ in us'; on a pure and honest heart, on a loving soul, on a will devoted and active,—this truth will live and cause us to live with it. And the church for which he prayed, which shall be spacious enough to contain all the sincere, all the disinterested, all the morally great, all the innocent, and all the repentant — that church, truly universal, which in the past already unites so many noble souls separated by barriers now tottering — that church will never perish."

Henry Thomas Buckle, whose brilliant work on the "History of Civilization in England" was warmly welcomed as a most valuable contribution to the literature of the world, in a letter to Mr. Parker, with whom he had corresponded, expressing his regret that he was unable to meet him when in London in 1859, calls him "the most advanced leader of opinion in one of the two first nations of the world."

Frances Power Cobbe, who edited the complete edition of Parker's works published in England, praises him in this fashion: "He was a great and good man; the greatest and best, perhaps, which America has produced. He was great in many ways. In time to come his country will glory in his name, the world will acknowledge all his gifts and powers. His true greatness, however, will in future ages rest on this: — that God revealed Himself to his faithful soul in his most adorable aspects; that he preached with undying faith,

and lived out in his life the lesson he had thus been taught; that he was worthy to be the prophet of the greatest of all truths,— the absolute goodness of God, the central truth of the universe.”

Mr. Parker, during his visit in Europe, in 1833–34, made the personal acquaintance of many eminent scholars, with some of whom he had corresponded, and was warmly received, and recognized as a kindred spirit, especially in Germany, where he had much friendly intercourse with the leading minds in that center of learning,— among them De Wette, whose “ Introduction to the Old Testament ” he had translated, of which a reviewer of this work in the *Christian Examiner* remarks:— “ Few, even among scholars, can easily reckon the amount of labor bestowed by the translator. For anything except the mere critical reference he has made it practically a new work. The whole body of literature which it reflects and represents he has studied with independent judgment, posting up the bibliography of the subject to the freshest dates. . . . He fairly divides the honors of the work with the original composer. . . . Large and brave service he has rendered in many ways, and this striking monument of his dogged industry and scholarly wealth of reading we take pleasure in welcoming once more to its permanent place among the classics of Biblical criticism.”

In the last year of his life, when traversing Europe again, Mr. Parker renewed his acquaintance with some of the eminent men he had met before, and found new friends wherever he went. One of the pleasantest events of that year was his visit to Prof. Edward Desor, the naturalist, a man of great scientific knowledge, of simple tastes and habits, and of great integrity, who welcomed him to his home in Switzerland, where he spent some weeks in company with a number of other

scientists and theologians. Desor had been a most congenial friend for several years, and stopped for several weeks at Parker's house when in America.

In Italy he was welcomed by the Brownings, who greatly appreciated him.

A letter from Florence, Italy, dated May 8, 1860, to the *New York Times*, by an unknown writer, contains the following tribute:—"Like so many Americans, wandering in Europe in pursuit of health or pleasure or instruction, Mr. Parker has come to close his eyes in Florence. Four or five have died here during the last four months. The thought is saddening that the career of Mr. Parker is to end so soon, that in the maturity of his years and his intellectual strength these great powers are no longer to be exerted in this world. Whatever feeling may be entertained towards him by those who do not sympathize with his views, there are none but must admire and reverence his mind of wondrous scope, his uncommon attainments, his extraordinary intellectual independence and moral energy, the great purity of his character, and the exalted ends for which he has labored and sacrificed his life. When the great work for the accomplishment of which some of the best men are devoting their efforts is done, and the noise of the warfare is hushed, then will this large-hearted champion enter into the full heritage of his fame. His golden words, or those others, as hard, bright and sharp as steel, will fall on generous hearts, or excite stern souls, as they already have done, to do something for the welfare of the human race. The grave closes over him, but the ideas he has advanced will remain to exert their influence for good upon generations yet unborn. A man with an intellect so acute and forceful, trained by a course of study so thorough and almost universal, devoted to the highest subjects



of human concern, active beyond the usual limit of active men, a profound thinker and scholar, a most forcible writer and speaker, a sincere and earnest well-wisher of the race,— he has left a void which this generation will vainly seek to fill. Controversy is hushed in the presence of death, and in this hour of saddest portent we may well pause to deplore the sudden termination of such a brilliant career.”

From India came this interesting statement: —“ The Baboos have given up their idols and Shastees, and have for themselves accepted Theodore Parker. Some are pantheists and others deists. Those who are intimate with educated Hindoos state that no modern writings have exercised a greater influence over them than those of Theodore Parker. It involves no loss of caste to believe in him, but to become a Christian, to attend church and receive the rite of baptism, to believe in Jesus as a Saviour is to become an apostate, unclean and impure. No man can become a Christian without being cast off by his dearest friends,— wife, children, father, mother, all hate and curse him; but no such consequences follow when idols and Shastees are rejected, and the theology of Mr. Parker is accepted instead.”

The use of the word “ Christian ” in the above statement doubtless refers to the missionaries who were sent out by the Orthodox Church to convert the “ heathens ” of India to their kind of Christianity, and to their followers.

Rakhal Des Haldar, an intelligent Brahman, wrote to Mr. Parker from India of the interest in his writings wherever there was intelligent conversation on religious topics among his countrymen.

The foregoing tributes to Mr. Parker, while showing how warmly he was welcomed and esteemed in other



countries than his own, recognize and appreciate the religious side of his character, and the great work he accomplished in freeing men from bigotry and superstition, and inculcating an idea of God and man, and the relation between them, acceptable to the human understanding and satisfying to the soul.

In this connection, a very pleasant recognition of his work and expression of sympathy with his teachings, is revealed in a letter addressed to the Twenty-Eighth Congregational Society, in 1854, by Dr. Johannes Ronge and his associates.

Ronge had been a German Catholic priest in Silesia, who, having quarreled with the authorities of his church, was suspended from his office, and living in retirement. In 1844, Bishop Arnoldi appointed a special service and pilgrimage to Treves, on the occasion of the exhibition of the "Holy Coat," to be preceded by confession and remission of sins. Ronge addressed a public letter to the bishop, in which he characterized the exhibition of the coat as idolatry. This action was approved by many Catholics, as well as Protestants. He subsequently addressed an appeal to the lower orders of the priesthood calling on them to use their influence to break the power of the court at Rome and priestcraft in general throughout Germany; to set up a national German church independent of Rome, governed by councils and synods; to abolish auricular confession, the Latin mass, and the celibacy of the priests; and to aim at liberty of conscience for all Christians, and perfect freedom for the religious education of children. Ronge was chosen preacher of a congregation formed at Breslau, with a confession of faith which wholly departed from the doctrine and ritual of the Roman Catholic Church. The Scripture was laid down as the only rule of Christian faith, and no external authority to be allowed to interfere with the free interpretation of

it. Belief in God as the Creator and Governor of the world, and the Father of all men; in Christ as the Saviour; in the Holy Spirit, the holy Christian Church, forgiveness of sins and eternal life, were the essentials of doctrine. Baptism and the Lord's Supper were the only sacraments. Confirmation was retained, but most of the rites of the Roman Catholic Church were given up. The advance movement went rapidly forward, and by the end of 1845, it included about three hundred congregations. Professors and other leading Catholics joined in it, and leading Protestants like Gervinns looked upon it as a momentous event in the history of Germany. Orthodox Catholics opposed it, conservative Protestants thought it was undermining religion in general, and dangerous to the welfare of Church and State. The governments of Saxony and Prussia imposed tyrannical restrictions upon the "Dissidents," as the authorities styled them, and Austria sent them out of her territories. Disagreements on points of doctrine arose among themselves, and two parties were formed, one conservative, the other radical and free-thinking, the latter led by Ronge, who was active in traveling and preaching, and his followers increased. Political opposition became more active, and he retired to London, where he had wider scope for the promulgation of his liberal theological ideas. Both he and his accomplished wife were friends of Froebel, and were much interested in kindergarten work. Numerous schools of this kind were established in France and Germany, and between 1854 and 1866, thirty or forty were in successful operation in England. Besides Ronge's active participation in this line, his church work was carried forward on the most liberal basis, as will be seen by the letter to Mr. Parker's society above mentioned, which is here reproduced:

## LONDON HUMANISTIC ASSOCIATION

32 TAVISTOCK PLACE, TAVISTOCK SQ.,

September 21, 1854.

To the Boston Free Church, Twenty-Eighth Congregational Society, under the ministry of the Reverend Theodore Parker:—

DEAR AND ESTEEMED FRIENDS: We so thoroughly agree with you in statements, in feeling, and in hope, and your minister is so much ours also that we long to have a more tangible and expressed union so far as possible, and participation in each other's struggles. You will be pleased to know that your pastor's sermons are looked for in Europe as anxiously as by yourselves; that the words uttered in Boston are heard not only in all the religious communities in England and Germany, but that many who have not the clear light or moral courage to proclaim the pure human natural religion, are still glad to refresh themselves at our table, and they are daily becoming more wise and tolerant. We are well aware that your minister cannot be alone; that there must be many true hearts clustering around him, lending him their inspiration; that you have one voice, but many tongues; and feeling thus, we greet you all, from the least to the greatest,—for although we admire talent and rejoice in the strength of a brother's arm, we would not forget the widow and her two mites. The higher religious sympathy makes all one.

We are only imperfectly acquainted with your trials in America; but we have little to complain of here. We have absolute freedom to propagate our views. The difficulty is to get a hearing, for in the din and clamor of millions of tongues ours is often lost or unheeded.

The people here are so much absorbed by trade and

war that it is only the larger sects that are listened to, and those only by a certain class, what are called "the respectable people." The great mass of our intelligent artisans, the life and soul of the nation, is as indifferent to the Church as it is to Mahometanism. Nearly all our sects wheedle, coax and curse it; but this class goes whistling on its way, perfectly indifferent to bishop or ranter. Neither is this to be attributed to the prevalence of atheism, for we have but few atheists amongst us. The heart of England is, as it ever has been, religious, and turns to the All-Father as the child to the parent. But our churches have separated religion from life, and our people have separated themselves from the churches, as pieces of mechanism which they do not understand. We are seeking these sheep without a shepherd, carrying them the little we know, and telling them how much we feel; and the common people hear us gladly.

We have no persecution in England; but on the continent our communities have had grievous afflictions. It is the winter and the storms, the cold and the rain, that are felling the tender plants, but there is sufficient vitality to last until spring. Already there are indications of the approaching season. The frost giants sit insecurely on the grave of liberty and the breaking up of the ice is at hand. We do not despair of Germany. She is sleeping, but not dead.

Ours is the lot of all reformers. We are rich in heart and soul, but poor in purse. Fashionable benevolence invests its capital in older organizations, in those recognized in society, and leaves us to fight our way as best we can.

We have in addition to our Sunday meeting a good school, and we are introducing a new system of infant teaching, the kindergarten of M. Froebel. We attach much importance to this system of juvenile training, and beg to recommend it to your consideration.



What are the atheists doing amongst you? Here they are active but by no means numerous. Many have given up the name, and to some extent the profession of atheism as a system. They are simply iconoclasts, and as we are all artists and architects, it is of course impossible that we can unite. Have you any newspapers, magazines or reviews? If so, we shall be happy to read them, and if agreeable contribute articles, either in English or German. At all events, if you have no papers, we shall be glad of a letter from you, and hope to continue our correspondence. M. Ronge has had several invitations from communities in America who correspond with us to visit them, and the probability is that he will do so at some future time. It will be no small pleasure to him to see you and to exchange those personal greetings which are so much more agreeable than mere correspondence. Should your minister or any of your friends visit this country, our community will esteem a visit from them a great favor.

We remain, dear friends, in behalf of the Association,  
Sincerely and faithfully yours,

JOHANNES RONGE, Chairman.

VITTINGHOFF,

BERTHA RONGE,

F. VALLINGHOFF,

JOHN ELLIS,

R. A. DUNCAN, Secretary.

To this communication a cordial response was made by the representatives of the Twenty-Eighth Congregational Church.

*Page 77, note 4.* This reference was to Rev. John T. Sargent, a minister to the poor, who preached in Suffolk Street Chapel in Boston, which was under the control of the Fraternity of Churches. He led his flock in spiritual things, and contributed in material



ways to their comfort and happiness from his own resources. He was doing a noble work for which he was admirably fitted. He did not share the prejudice of the clergy in general against Mr. Parker, with whom he sometimes exchanged pulpits, much to the satisfaction of his parish, who gladly listened to the great reformer. This alarmed the Executive Committee of the Fraternity, who exercised their technical right to ask Mr. Sargent not to admit so dangerous a man into his pulpit. They dreaded his influence, feared the poor would be corrupted and misled by his teachings. Mr. Sargent manfully resigned rather than take a pledge that he would not exchange with him, and his people were thus deprived of the services of their best friend and helper.

## PRAYERS

*Page 120, note 1.* The Fugitive Slave Bill had recently been enacted by a pro-slavery administration, and the anti-slavery people of Boston and elsewhere were roused to a high state of indignation against this iniquitous statute, and active in denouncing it, and devising schemes to prevent its execution,—warning the fugitives who had previously escaped to the North and were located there, concealing them, or aiding them to reach Canada, and providing for the newly-arrived in a similar way. No one was more zealous in this work than Mr. Parker. He was chairman of the Boston Vigilance Committee, and did noble service in raising public opinion against the kidnappers, and in defeating their efforts to capture the fugitives.

The ministers of many of the prominent churches in the North gave their support to the Fugitive Slave Bill.

*Page 131, note 2.* The bronze statue of Beethoven, which was sculptured by Crawford, and presented to the Music Hall Association by Charles C. Perkins, was

inaugurated with appropriate ceremonies on the evening of March 1, 1856, prominent among which was the recital of a poem by William W. Story. Besides the reference to this event in his prayer, the next day, Mr. Parker made the following allusion to it in his sermon:—

“I honor great power of thought, few perhaps more so. I reverence with great esteem a man of genius for art, poetry, science, practical life, with executive power to plan and build, to organize matter or men into forms of use and beauty. When I meet with such an one, spite of me, down go the stiff knees of my veneration. And most spontaneously do I bow to a man of great justice, one of the pillars of righteousness. I know several such, whom the good God has set up here and there in great towns and little, and I take off my hat thereto, with an inward relish of the homage that I pay them, as I shudder a little with delight, as a poetic-minded New Englander needs must when he first sees a great antique temple of Grecian or Roman art, or when he stands for the first time before the statue of Apollo, which enchants the world, or Olympian Jove,—

“—which young Phidias wrought,  
Not from a vain and shallow thought,”

or when he stands before this majestic figure, in which one great American artist, cradled in poverty, has incarnated the lofty lineaments of another great artist, also cradled in poverty, who beforehand had builded himself a monument more lasting than brass, for he had carved out of the unseen air a figure of himself, which will endure when this brass shall have dissolved itself into gases and escaped into the sky.

“There, my friends, stands a new colleague, whom I welcome to the work of philanthropy and piety. He is ordained as colleague, pastor with myself. It is a

great honor that I, prosy man as I am, stand at the feet of that incarnation alike of music and poetry; and when I am silent that majestic brow will appeal to you; those eyes, turned upward and looking inward, will disclose to you the vision through his faculty divine; and when my hand writes not, that figure will still be to you emblematic of higher thoughts than I can set to music in poetry or speech. That is one great idealizer; there is a dearer one, and that is the love which his song represents, and which the sculptor's art would fail to portray."

## POEM BY WILLIAM W. STORY

Lift the veil! the work is finished,  
Fresh-created from the hands  
Of the artist, grand and simple  
There our great Beethoven stands;

Clay no longer, he hath risen  
From the burial mold of earth,  
To a golden form transfigured  
By a new and glorious birth.

Art has bid the evanescent  
Pause and know no more decay;  
Made the mortal shape immortal,  
That to dust has passed away.

There's the brow by thought o'erladen  
With its tempest of wild hair,  
There the mouth so sternly silent,  
And the square cheeks seamed with care.

There the eyes so visionary,  
Staring out, yet seeing nought  
But the inward world of genius,  
And the ideal forms of thought.

There the hand that gave its magic  
To the cold, dead ivory keys,  
And from out them tore the struggling forms  
Of mighty symphonies.

There the figure, calm, centered,  
On the breast the great head bent,  
Stands forever thus, great master,  
Thou thy fittest monument.

Poor in life, by friends deserted,  
Through disease and pain and care,  
Bravely, stoutly, hast thou striven,  
Never yielding to despair.

High the claims of art upholding,  
Firm to freedom in a crowd,  
Where the highest bent as courtiers,  
Speaking manfully and loud.

In thy silent world of deafness,  
Broken by no human word,  
Music sang with voice ideal  
While thy listening spirit heard.

Tones consoling and prophetic,  
Tones to raise, refine and cheer,  
Deathless tones that thou hast garnered  
To refresh and charm us here.

And for all those riches priceless,  
All those wondrous gifts of thine,  
We have only time-dry laurel,  
On thy careworn brow to twine.

We can only say, Great Master,  
Take the homage of our heart,  
Be the high priest of our temple,  
Dedicate to thee and art.

Stand before us and enlarge us,  
With thy presence and thy power,  
And o'er all art's deeps and shadows  
Light us like a beacon tower.

In the mighty realm of music  
There is but a single speech,  
Universal as the world is,  
That to every heart can reach.

Thou within that realm art monarch,  
But the humblest vassal there  
Knows the accent of that language  
When it calls to war or prayer.

Underneath its world-wide banyan,  
Friends, the gathering nations sit,  
Red Sioux and dreamy Germans  
Dance and feast and fight for it.

When the storm of battle rages,  
And the brazen trumpet blares,  
Cheering on the sacred tumult,  
In the van the meteor flares.

Sings the laureled song of conquest,  
O'er the buried comrade wails,  
Plays the peaceful pipes of shepherds  
In the lone Etrurian vales.

Whispers love beneath the lattice  
Where the honeysuckle clings,  
Crowns the bowl and cheers the dancers,  
And it peace to sorrow brings.

Nature knows its wondrous magic,  
Always speaks in tone and rhyme;  
Doubles in the sea the heavens,  
Echo on the rocks the chime.



All her forests sway harmonious,  
All her torrents lisp in song,  
All the starry spheres make music,  
Gladly journeying along.

Thou hast touched its mighty mystery,  
With a finger as of fire;  
Thrilled the heart with rapturous longing,  
Bade the struggling soul aspire.

Through the daring modulations,  
Mounting up our dizzy stairs  
Of harmonic change and progress,  
Into high elysian airs,

Where the wings of angels graze us,  
And the voices of the spheres  
Seem not far, and glad emotions  
Fill the silent eyes with tears.

What a vast, majestic structure  
Thou hast builded out of sound,  
With its high peak piercing heaven  
And its deep base under ground.

Vague as air, yet firm and real  
To the spiritual eye,  
Seamed with fire its cloudy bastions  
Far away uplifted lie.

Like those sullen shapes of thunder  
We behold at close of day,  
Piled upon the fair horizon  
Where the jagged lightnings play.

Awful voices as from hades  
Thrill up growling from its heart,  
Sudden splendors blaze from out it,  
Cleaving its black walls apart.

While winged birds start forth and vanish,  
Singing as they pass from sight,  
Till at last it lifts, and 'neath it  
Lets a breeze of amber light.

When some single star is shining,  
Throbbing like a new-born thing,  
And the earth all dressed in splendor  
Hears the happy voices sing.

Topmost crown of ancient Athens,  
Towered the Phidian Parthenon,  
Upon freedom's noble forehead  
Art, the starry jewel, shone.

Here as yet in our republic,  
In the furrows of our soil,  
Slowly grows art's timid blossom  
'Neath the heavy foot of toil.

Spurn it not, but spare it, nurse it,  
Till it gladdens all the land,  
Hail to-day the seed of promise  
Planted by a generous hand,—  
Our first statue to an artist,  
Nobly given, nobly planned.

Never is a nation finished  
While it wants the grace of art,  
We must borrow robes from beauty,  
Life must rise above the mart.

Faith and love are all ideal,  
Speaking with a music tone,  
And without this touch of magic  
Labor is the devil's own.

Therefore are we glad to greet thee,  
Master artist, to thy place,  
For we need in all our living  
Beauty and ideal grace.

Mostly here to lift our nation,  
Move its heart, and calm its nerves,  
And to round life's angled duties  
To imaginative curves.

Mid the jarring din of traffic,  
Let the orphic tone of art  
Lull the barking Cerberus in us,  
Soothe the cares that gnaw the heart.

With thy universal language  
That our feeble speech transcends,  
Wing our thoughts that creep and grovel,  
Come to us when speaking ends.

Bear us into realms ideal,  
Where the court of common sense  
Dins no more its heartless maxims  
To the jingling of its pence.

Thence down-dropped into the actual  
We shall on our garments bear  
Perfume of an unknown region,  
Beauty of celestial air.

Life shall wear a nobler aspect,  
Joy shall greet us in the street,  
Earthly dust of low ambition  
Shall be shaken from our feet.

Evil spirits that torment us  
Into air shall vanish all,  
And the magic harp of David  
Soothe the haunted heart of Saul.

As of yore the swart Egyptians  
Rent the air with choral song,  
When Osiris' golden statue,  
Triumphing they bore along,

As along the streets of Florence  
Borne in glad procession, went  
Cimabues' famed Madonna,  
Praised by voice and instrument,

Let our voices sing thy praises,  
Let our instruments combine,  
Till the hall with triumph echo,  
For the hour and place are thine.

"The bronze statue of the man whose greatest sympathy broke forth into a song of joy for earth's millions, looked over the preacher, steadfast as bronze himself, while the warm heart beat and flowed. And earth must be rugged and solid to contain its own tides. The preacher and the composer were kindred in sorrows and in moral quality, in love and in scorn; they built faith upon the essential harmonies of the great world of nature and of man, and bade the tumultuous passages of life resolve themselves, with all their low, presageful thunder into the triumphant security which only the man who has kept himself like a little child can feel.

In this world there is no end of fine coincidences where things themselves are fine. The great German stands mutely in the hall of the great American, while he preaches a universal doctrine.

"In the mighty realm of music there is but a single speech,"

and that is the speech of all hearts who yearn for the harmonies of God, deep religious awe, tender depend-

ence, flashing, sarcastic sincerity, fiery indignation, pure humanity, love that melts all races, like kindred drops, into one heart, even that heart which the Father, through diversities, is striving to create."

"JOHN WEISS."

*Page 224, note 3.* This reference is to the assault on Charles Sumner, who on the 19th and 20th of May, 1856, delivered before the United States Senate a speech of great power and eloquence, in which he boldly exposed the subservience of the administration to the dictates of the slave power, and severely arraigned the advocates and promoters of slavery for their iniquities, of which the most conspicuous at that time was their effort to establish it in the territory of Kansas, then seeking admission to the Union as a State. This territory formed a portion of that large tract of country obtained from France in 1803, known as the Louisiana Purchase, from that part of which lying north of latitude  $30^{\circ} 30'$ , slavery was excluded by the Missouri Compromise of 1820, which measure was repealed in May, 1854, and it was left for the settlers to decide whether Kansas should become a free or a slave State. Missouri sent over its "border-ruffians," and other slave States contributed their worst desperadoes, to further the nefarious schemes of the pro-slavery leaders. The anti-slavery men in the free States were greatly roused, and many of them, armed with Sharp's rifles and other weapons, set off for Kansas to defeat these efforts. A fierce conflict ensued between the two parties, and was in full progress when Sumner delivered his speech in the Senate. It was given to the press under the title "The Crime Against Kansas." The poet Whittier on reading it sent this laconic message to the senator: "Thy best; enough for immortality!"

The pro-slavery members of Congress, who, backed



by the executive branch of the government, had hitherto, for a considerable while, managed affairs much to their own satisfaction, and fondly imagined that the whole country was to become subject to their will, were deeply incensed at the masterly exposition of their policies and the opposition to their methods by the senator from Massachusetts, whom they cordially hated, and immediately began plotting for revenge. They could not answer his arguments, and so resorted to the tactics of the highwayman and the assassin. Two days after the delivery of the speech, on the 22nd of May, while Mr. Sumner was busily engaged in writing at his desk in the Senate Chamber, several of the pro-slavery men entered the room, among them Preston S. Brooks, representative from South Carolina, who approached the senator, who was in such a position that he could not at once rise to his feet, and without warning commenced beating him upon the head with a bludgeon. Mr. Sumner fell to the floor, bleeding and unconscious. The blows were continued, until some other members of Congress rushed into the room and compelled the assailant to desist, and his victim was carried out by friendly hands.

A wave of indignation swept over the North, and the outrage was denounced as a cowardly assault upon a noble man and an insult to Massachusetts. Brooks was henceforth known as "Bully Brooks." A clamor of rejoicing ran through the South. The *Richmond Examiner* declared that "no event has transpired for many years which the South should hail with more pleasure." Brooks was lauded as a hero, and testimonials bestowed upon him by his admiring friends.

Mr. Sumner never fully recovered from his injuries; but after a painful illness during some years, from which he sought relief at home and abroad, he was sufficiently restored to resume his seat in the Senate, in December, 1859, having been re-elected during his absence for another term of six years.

This event, together with the struggle in Kansas, tended to rouse the North from its apathy, and to promote the sentiment for national freedom, which resulted in the election of Lincoln, the abolition of slavery in the District of Columbia, the issue of the Proclamation of Emancipation, and the overthrow of the slave power.

THEODORE PARKER'S EXPERIENCE AS A MINISTER,  
WITH SOME ACCOUNT OF HIS EARLY LIFE, AND  
EDUCATION FOR THE MINISTRY.

*Page 293, note 1.* This boyish familiarity with Nature and delight in her works strengthened with his growth and was a perpetual source of pleasure to him through all his life. His knowledge in this direction was exact and comprehensive. He was a keen observer, and took note of every natural object, animate or inanimate, that came within the range of his vision, wherever he might be. In the city he longed for the fields and woods to which he had been accustomed from his birth; next to books, they were essential to his comfort and happiness. It was a sore disappointment if he did not get out of town in time for the apple blossoms.

Here are some passages from his diary: "Went over to West Roxbury to see the old familiar places — the dear old places. The seat under the willow was there just as I made it; the Rudbeckia was in blossom just as I planted it; the hibiscus where I set it; but the new proprietor has torn up the sumachs which I nourished with such care. There were the two favorite spots, — the little cosy place under the cedars where I have spent so many delightful hours, the walk in the woods, with the houseleek, the golden moss, and the peppermint all there; all the rest had died; the rose-bush was gone, even the old pine was dead. I went and gathered my favorite flowers in the old locations, the *Houstonia* re-

curvata, etc. The trees have grown abundantly; all else looked natural, but a deal of sadness comes into the heart on visiting alone the places which are endeared by association with others, such as the rocks in the woods."

"Walking the other day in the woods, in the midst of the snow at the bottom of a steep hill, I found a little spring of water, clear as the sky above, and as unruffled, not frozen, though winter had set its seal stiffly upon everything around. Over this beautiful spring there arose a great oak, very old and 'stern to look upon,' one which had mocked at many winters. This great oak clasped a young hemlock tree with its arms, and seemed to hold it in shelter from all the rude blasts of time. The younger tree had evidently grown up under its protection, and now repaid its defender by looking kindly upon him, when his own leaves had all fallen away. It was beauty in the arms of strength."

This deep sympathy with nature constantly appeared in his sermons and prayers, and gave them a poetic tinge, which charmed the listener or the reader.

He took pleasure in animals of every description, and was never tired of watching them.

But his sympathy for men, women and children rose far above his feeling for nature, animate and inanimate, and for all the expressiveness of art.

*Page 296, note 2.* Early in the temperance movement, Dr. Lyman Beecher preached a masterly sermon on the subject of intemperance, which greatly stirred the people everywhere. Shortly after Mr. Parker was settled in the Twenty-eighth Congregational Society, he preached a sermon on the same subject, which was published, and fell into the hands of Dr. Beecher, who had retired from the ministry. He was so much pleased with it that he went to see Mr. Parker, who greeted him cordially. Dr. Beecher said: "I have just been

reading your temperance sermon, and have come here to tell you that I like it. It is the best I ever read, and I hope you will go on fearlessly in the glorious work. You have given the monster, Hercules blows. Follow them up! Follow them up!" He asked Mr. Parker about his theological views, which he explained to him, not concealing the fact that he had no sympathy with the theology of Dr. Beecher. The venerable man then remarked, "Well, Mr. Parker, I am much gratified with this interview. We are both at work in the same cause in bettering the conditions of humanity, I trust, and advancing the cause of truth in the world. True, we are traveling in different paths, but if we are careful to keep within hail of each other, we cannot help arriving at the same place." The interview ended with mutual feelings of warm regard. Here was a friendly recognition of good work that Mr. Parker was doing, regardless of the most widely divergent theological opinions entertained by the parties, in striking contrast to the course pursued by some other clergymen, more sectarian and less humane.

Dr. Beecher was once invited to a consultation of the evangelical clergy of Boston, as to the best means of staying the influence of Mr. Parker's preaching. When apprised of the object of the meeting, he very gravely informed them that Mr. Parker was doing his own work in his own way, and if they would be as faithful as he to their own mission their apprehensions would cease.

A similar manifestation of kind feeling towards Mr. Parker by Henry Ward Beecher occurred at a later period. In 1857, he delivered one of the lectures in the course projected by the Fraternity Association, composed chiefly of members of Mr. Parker's congregation, for which he was assailed by the *New York Examiner*, an exponent of malignant Orthodoxy, and charged with "giving *eclat* to an infidel enterprise,"



thereby subjecting to suspicion the soundness of his own orthodoxy. Mr. Beecher made an able and elaborate reply in the *New York Independent*, exposing the absurdity of this charge, on the ground that the widest difference in theological views did not prevent those who held them from coöperating in any good work. His article is marred by much theological dogmatism and clerical egotism in defining his own beliefs, which was quite unnecessary, but contained this passage: "Word comes that Mr. Parker, broken down by over-labor, seeks rest and restoration in a warmer clime. Should these lines reach his eye let him know that one heart at least remembers his fidelity to man in great public exigencies, when so many swerved of whom we had a right to expect better things. God shield him from the ocean, the storm, the pestilence, and heal him of lurking disease!"

*Page 297, note 3.* This freedom of thought permitted to the students by the professors of the Theological School became a serious offense in Theodore Parker, when he publicly declared his views of religion, and sectarian opposition began to manifest itself in a very positive manner. The sermon of Emerson in July, 1838, at the graduation of the divinity class, at their invitation, in which he exposed the weaknesses and faults of the Church, roused the ire of the Cambridge theologians. Andrews Norton came to the rescue in 1839 with an address on "The Latest Form of Infidelity." A long discussion between him and George Ripley and others followed, and several pamphlets on either side were issued. Mr. Parker joined therein with one entitled "The Previous Question between Mr. Andrews Norton and his Alumni moved and handled in a Letter to all these gentlemen, by Levi Blodgett."

Mr. Parker had entered Harvard College on August 23, 1830, having passed the required examinations. He remained at home, doing his share of the work upon the



farm, continuing his studies, and going to Cambridge to take part in the examinations. He was always ahead of his class. Not having paid any tuition fees, he was not entitled to a degree. But in 1834, at the suggestion of his friend Dr. Convers Francis, the usual degree of A.B. was offered him upon payment of the fees for instruction for four years, a considerable sum, quite beyond his means, and he could not buy his degree. In 1840, at the suggestion of friends who thought it a shame that so distinguished a mind should be unrecognized, the degree of A.M. was conferred upon him. This required urging, for the quality of mind was not such as the Cambridge men approved; some were unwilling that so pronounced a rationalist should be an acknowledged son of Harvard.

The clamor of denunciation and abuse which burst out upon the delivery of the famous South Boston sermon at the ordination of Mr. Shackford, on May 19, 1841, "The Transient and Permanent in Christianity," in which the Unitarians were as vehement as the Orthodox,—forgetting how themselves had been assailed in former years for promulgating a more liberal form of religion than had hitherto prevailed,—was in evidence at Cambridge as elsewhere.

The opposition and unfriendliness of the Unitarian clergy to Mr. Parker, with a few notable exceptions, continued to the end of his life. Meanwhile he went calmly on in the great work in which he was engaged, confident that he was right, heedless of the clamor of lesser men, preaching and lecturing to great audiences, who never tired of listening, ignoring the tricks of the revivalists and other exhorters, while his influence continually strengthened and widened throughout the land and other lands, and hosts of friends looked to him for guidance, and cheered and encouraged him in his labors. Among them were many of the Harvard students, who were accustomed to walk from Cambridge

to Boston, to listen to his Sunday discourses and lectures in that city, and back to Cambridge, fired with zeal and enthusiasm at what they had heard.

In 1857, the senior class in the Cambridge Divinity School invited Mr. Parker to deliver the customary address before them and the public the Sunday before their graduation. The faculty, contrary to the rights of the alumni and the law of the University, refused to allow him to address them. The young men stood their ground, and made a manly protest against the violation of the school's essential principle of intellectual freedom, but it was of no avail, and the class then declined to elect any other preacher. This insult offered by Harvard, known as a "liberal institution," to her most illustrious son, is a sad instance of the short-sightedness and narrowness of men claiming to be Christians and to represent the highest ethical culture.

At a Divinity School alumni meeting in July, 1859, Moncure D. Conway offered a resolution of sympathy with Mr. Parker in his illness, which expressed a hope of his return with renewed strength to his post of duty. It was supported by James Freeman Clarke, and opposed by others, and failed to pass,—the old theological venom still rankling in the Unitarian body and preventing a word of consolation and good cheer to the worn-out man, who had sacrificed his life in the service of humanity.

During the fifty years which have elapsed since the death of Mr. Parker, a radical change has occurred in the estimate of him and his work, not only among the Unitarians, who now acknowledge him as their great leader, and are eager to do him honor, but in the Orthodox ranks his influence is plainly apparent in the modification of their Calvinistic theology, and the more humane ideas of God, of man, and the relation between them, as expressed in their preaching and their literature.

Even Harvard College entertains a saner opinion of the great "heretic," and during the Commencement Exercises in 1908, a marble tablet was placed in Divinity Hall, of which this is a copy :

THEODORE PARKER

1810      1860

GRADUATE OF THIS SCHOOL 1836

PREACHER REFORMER SCHOLAR

MASTER OF WIDE LEARNING APPLIED TO HUMAN USES BY FRANK AND UNSPARING SPEECH

FEARLESS FOLLOWER OF JESUS BEARING WITNESS TO THE TRUTH

LOVER OF RIGHTEOUSNESS HATER OF INIQUITY

A HERO IN FIGHT A SAINT IN PRAYER  
HE PROCLAIMED AS HUMAN INTUITION THE  
PERFECTION OF GOD THE AUTHORITY  
OF CONSCIENCE THE ASSURANCE  
OF IMMORTALITY

SIN TO REBUKE TO BREAK THE CAPTIVES  
CHAINS

TO CALL THY BRETHREN FORTH FROM WANT  
AND WOE

David A. Wasson, a wise and careful observer, said of him shortly after his death: "Not only ages, but entire civilizations may pass, before another man shall arise just so gifted and equipped as him whom we commemorate to-day. It is not so much that his powers were rare in kind, though they were surely rare, very rare in degree, but his distinction is that he combined in himself qualities and powers which separately would have made only a multitude of strong men, and in their vital union produced that brand of the Lord, that Missouri of manhood, whom we remember as Theodore Parker."

Nearly two generations have gone by, and one new civilization has been much in evidence during the last half century, that of Japan, but the farthest-reaching telescope has not yet discovered any luminary indicating that a second Theodore Parker is at hand.

*Page 391, note 4.* At a prayer meeting held at Park Street Church, Boston, within a stone's throw of the Music Hall, on March 6, 1858, for the purpose of praying for the conversion of "that notorious infidel, Theodore Parker," some of the forms of prayer offered were as follows:

"O Lord, *if* this man (Parker) *is* a subject of grace, convert him and bring him into the kingdom of thy dear Son; but if he is beyond the reach of the saving influence of the gospel, *remove* him out of the way, and let his influence *die with him!*"

"O, Lord, send *confusion* and *distraction* into his study *this afternoon* and *prevent* his finishing his preparation for his labors *to-morrow*, or if he shall attempt to *desecrate* thy holy day by attempting to speak to the people, meet him there, Lord, and *confound* him so that he shall not be able to speak!"

"O Lord, meet this infidel on his way, who, like another Saul of Tarsus, is *persecuting* the Church of God, and cause a light to shine around him, which shall bring him trembling to the earth, and make him an able defender of the faith which he has so long labored to destroy."

"Lord, we know that we cannot *argue* him down, and the more we say against him, the more will the people flock after him, and the more will they love and revere him. O Lord, what shall be done for Boston if thou dost not take this and some other matters in hand!"

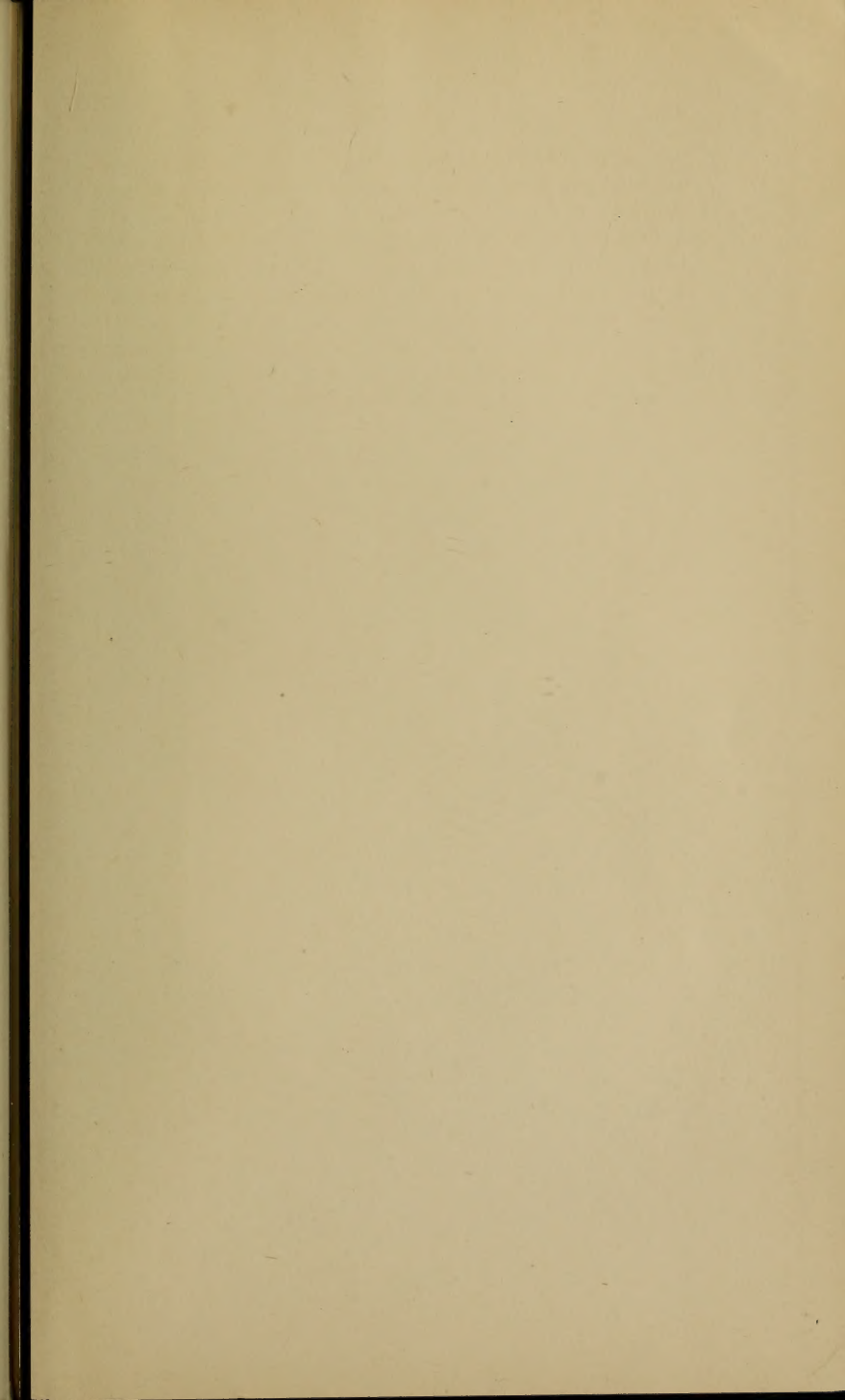
"O, Lord, if this man will still persist in speaking in public, induce *the people* to leave him and come and *fill this house instead of that!*"

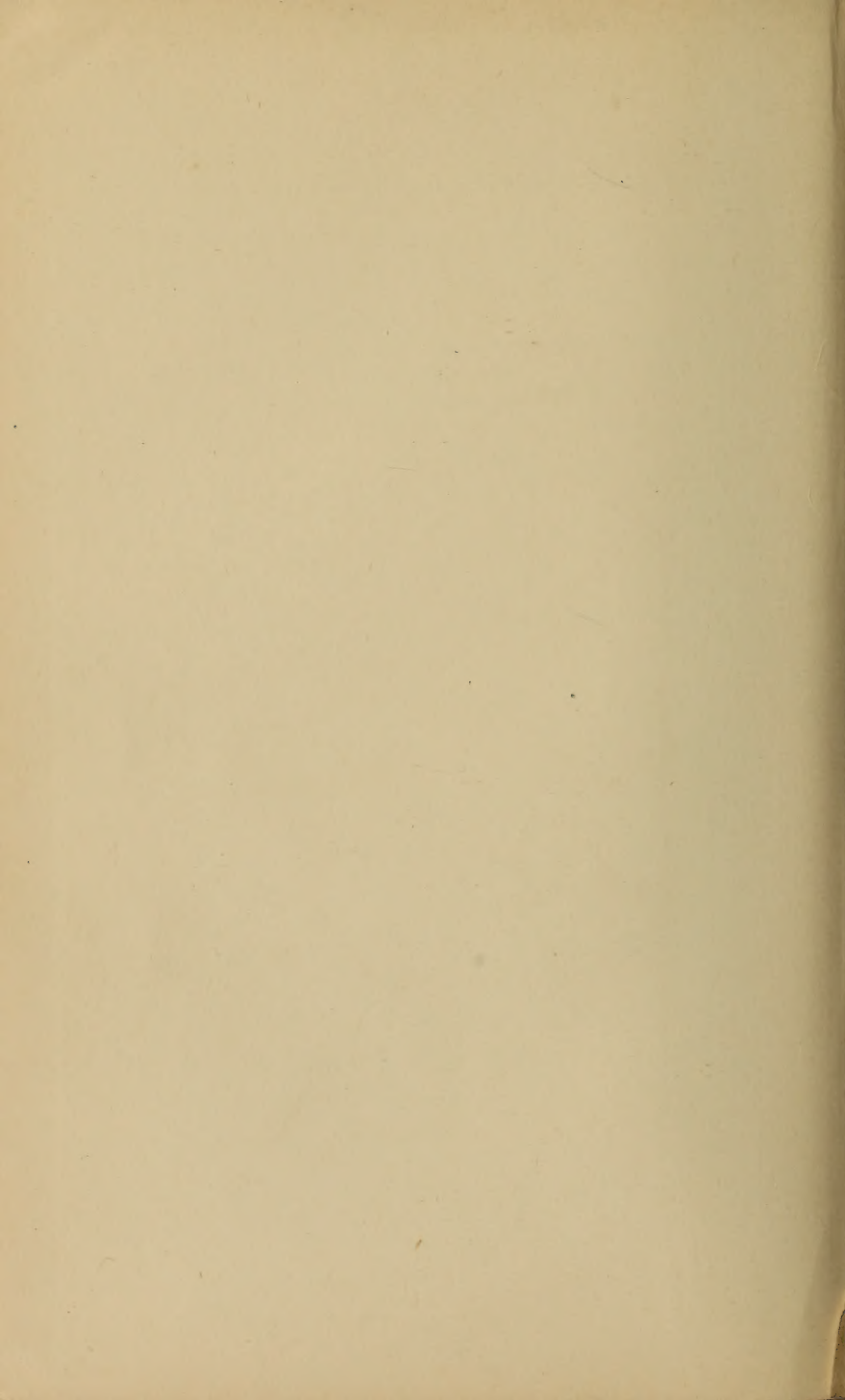
One exhorted his brethren to pray that "God will put a *hook* in *this* man's *jaws*, so that he may not be able to speak."

One requested his brethren, whether in their places of business, or walking in the street, or wherever they might be, to *pray* for Mr. Parker every day when *the clock should strike one*.

The place where this church is located, at the corner of Park and Tremont Streets, was at that time facetiously known as "Brimstone Corner."









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